

I know that anything I may say upon this floor is entitled to, or will receive, but little consideration or weight; but I do ask and implore gentlemen to consider this matter. This thing has been brought up unexpectedly in this house, at least so far as I am concerned. I do not know what other gentlemen knew about it. But I beg gentlemen to look well to the course of action in which they are about to embark. I ask them whether, from a spirit of prejudice, or partisan hate, they are willing to incorporate in their organic law a provision which to my mind contains such objectionable features. I insist that this section two, as reported from the committee, ought to be sufficient to satisfy even the most ultra upon this subject.

I will suggest here that as I heard the amendment read I think the gentleman has left out a portion of section two, as reported by the majority of the committee; that although a man may come back to Maryland having in his pocket 40,000 copies of the amnesty proclamation of the executive of the country, wiping out the offences of that man committed against him, yet when he came to tread the soil of his native State, he would be to all intents and purposes as an outcast, exiled and banished. I suggest to the gentleman the propriety of having this incorporated, applying to the men who have left us and will come back, that they may not come back to our borders thus disfranchised and branded. Let bygones be bygones. Let the dead past bury its dead. Let us, when this unhappy war shall come to an end, try to forget the past, and embark, if we can, upon a new era of happiness and of prosperity.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE: I am surprised at the language which has fallen from the gentleman from Charles, who has just taken his seat. Malice, prejudice, partisan hate—those are the motives which are ascribed to the introduction of this article. Pray, where do we stand, and what are we doing? Even now we can almost hear the echo of the guns fired by natives of Maryland, not at the troops of the land, but at the peaceful, quiet citizens of Frederick, Washington and Montgomery counties; fired by natives of Maryland, robbing, plundering highwaymen, ranging through the highways and byways and mountains of those counties, crossing from our own State into Pennsylvania and burning Chambersburg, in visiting Cumberland in our own State; those guns and bayonets directed at the hearts of peaceful, quiet husbandmen about their daily avocations. When we propose to brand such conduct as it deserves, we are charged with malice, prejudice, partisan hate. Pray, sir, what is prejudice? Judgment before the fact. Is this judgment before the fact? It is written in characters of fire and blood in every county of this State.

And because of what? Has Maryland se-

ceded? Do those men shelter themselves under the flimsy pretext of State's rights men? Has the action of their own State in any form carried them into rebellion against the government of the United States, the national government over them? They have not even this shadowy, flimsy pretext; but individuals of our State have by scores gone to join these armies. The gentleman from Montgomery, not now in his seat (Mr. Lansdale,) will tell you that but a few days ago one of these recreant sons of Maryland, with a whole brigade at his heels, came to his house, and demanded lodging for his thieving horde there, and quartered himself in his private house, and upon his premises they plundered far and wide.

Suppose that man comes back here to accomplish by his votes what he fails to accomplish in arms. Is he to have all the rights of the gentleman from Charles who has just taken his seat (Mr. Edelen,) and who has remained here as a loyal man during this time? Is that justice? Is it prejudice, malice, partisan hate, to say to him that he shall not exercise those rights?

Can we try and convict these men of treason? Will not the same voice that pleads for them upon this floor, in the jury-box and elsewhere, clamor against such a violation of the right of war? You remember that at the battle of Gettysburg, they were taken, I will not name them, from commander J. R. Trimble down. They were brought to Baltimore; and how did they stand? were they prisoners of war, or were they arrested felons? They were natives of Maryland, citizens here, who had not left the State with the design of remaining abroad, who had left the State only to gather a force with which they might come back as conquerors and place the yoke of the Southern Confederacy upon the neck of Maryland; and how have they been treated? If they are still citizens of Maryland, notwithstanding that practical abjuration, they may vote at your election to-morrow, unless you have such a provision as this to prevent it.

There were scores of persons of my own acquaintance among the rabble crowd brought to Baltimore after that battle. They have been treated hitherto as prisoners of war. Some of them have been exchanged, and some are now in the various fortresses of the Union. Suppose peace takes place to-morrow; what then? Are they to move among men here with all the rights and privileges of those whom the month or week before they were endeavoring to destroy? It is gross injustice. It is a wanton outrage. They have shown that they are fit for any crime. They have done their utmost, staked their lives, in the determination and effort to overthrow our government. Will they not be glad peaceably and quietly to accomplish the same result by going to the ballot-box and voting there? Shall we permit that? They have committed