After he had commenced to read his arguments, the Chair desired to know from him whether it was a report or merely his individual views, on which several voices cried "go on."

Mr. Jacobs stated that what he was reading was his report.

The Chair informed the Convention that he must be allowed to decide all questions of order, and that there should be no manifestations like that just heard.

A member suggested that Mr. Jacobs be permitted to proceed with the reading of his argument, in which, after stating that he was friendly to the negroes, referred to their condition in other States, where they were habitually idle and dissipated. He said that the only way to prevent slaves from escaping was by putting a log on the track of the undergroud railroad. He continued at length to advocate the resolutions.

At the conclusion of his remarks or report, Mr. B. T. Johnson, of Frederick, moved that each speaker be limited to thirty minutes, which motion was amended so as to allow twenty minutes, and adopted.

Judge Mason observed that the majority report had been considered in the committee, and that it had been adopted by it almost unanimously. He, however, said he did not agree entirely with it or the report of Mr. Jacobs.

The Vice-President, Mr. Key, moved that the chairman of each portion of the committee be excepted from the operation of the rule limiting each speaker to twenty minutes.

Judge Mason, as well as Mr. Jacobs, stated that they would not avail themselves of the exception.

The Chair then stated that the first business in order was the majority report with the resolutions, then that the minority resolutions should be presented, when

Col. Sothoron, of St. Mary's, said that his view of the subject was that the Legislature should enact a law to prevent emancipation, and that the state or condition of free negroism should be abolished, and proceeded at some length to advocate his views. He then presented the following resolutions:

Resolved, That it is the sense of this Convention, that emancipation should not be allowed within the limits of this State, and that free negroism should be gradually abolished; therefore,

Resolved, That a committee of ——— be appointed to memorialize the Legislature, and obtain the passage of such laws as will attain these desirable objects.

Judge Mason said that he entertained similar views to Col. Sothoron.

Mr. James Pearre, of Frederick, moved that the majority report and resolutions be so amended as to include the views of Col. Sothoron.

The question was then stated by the Chair to be: first, the majority resolutions; then the minority, and such other substitutes as might be proposed.

Hon. J. A. Pearce, of Kent, differed with the Chair in respect to the precedence of the majority resolutions, and contended that the substitute should first be put to vote.

Judge Mason concurred with Mr. Pearce in his opinion, but the Chair adhered to its decision, from which no appeal was taken.

Mr. Marcus Du Val, of Prince George's County, offered the following resolutions:

Whereas, It is believed that the portion of the African race now held in slavery in the United States are better provided for and taken care of, and are happier, morally and socially, than any other portion of said race; *And Whereas*, it is shown that the free negroes of Maryland can animate

and corrupt the slave portion of our population, and looking upon the free negroes in Maryland as a nuisance, and an evil in our society, it would not be equitable and just to drive them beyond the jurisdiction of this State into any of our sister States, therefore

Be it Resolved by the Citizens of Maryland in Convention assembled, That we recommend to the voters of this State, the propriety of electing members this Fall for the General Assembly, who are in favor of enacting a bill empowering the Levy Court or the County Commissioners of the Counties in Maryland, and the City of Baltimore, as soon as possible after the passage of the bill, to cause every free negro within their respective jurisdiction, who is not over forty-five years of age, to be sold to the highest bidder, and that one-half of the proceeds of the sales be forwarded to the Treasurer of Maryland, and the remainder retained by the Commissioner for local purposes.

After the reading of the above resolutions, there was considerable excitement in the Hall, several members trying to obtain the floor at one time.

The majority resolutions were then read, when Mr. Jacobs proceeded to address the Convention in support of his views, and was followed by Col. Sothoron and B. H. Richardson, Esq., the latter of whom observed that the subject was one of extreme delicacy, and should be treated with great caution and prudence. To do this, it was necessary to have the resolution, upon which we proposed to act, fully before us—and he hoped the Convention would not undertake to act in the dark. We have had, said Mr. Richardson, a very long report read to us by way of argument. Very much of that report, however true its statements, had nothing to do with the questions before the Convention. We did not come here to talk about the opinions of Methodist preachers in New York. Those subjects might do very well for the newspapers—and that was their proper place. We come here to act for ourselves; to take care of our own interests without reference to the opinions of outsiders—Mr. R. suggested the propriety of having the resolutions printed and placed before the members that they might be able to act understandingly.

Mr. Nathaniel Duke, of Calvert County, hoped that the spirit of the law of 1839, as passed by the Assembly of Maryland, would be strictly carried out. That act provided for the enforcement or inculcation of habits and principles of industry on the part of the free negroes of the State. The crying evil every one present would admit was that they would not work. He hoped that they would sell them into slavery, at least those who would not work. To his certain knowledge, at least nine-tenths of the people of Maryland are in favor of either abolishing the free negroes at once, or enslaving them.

Augustus R. Sollers exclaimed—That I utterly deny; no such sentiments are held by many persons in this State.

Hon. J. Thompson Mason observed that the great question at issue was simply this: Shall Maryland become a Free State or a Slave State? That was the great point at issue, and it was folly for persons not to admit it. [Cries of that's right, go ahead, go ahead.] As far as he was concerned he had no personal interests at stake. He was not in favor of the proposition submitted by the gentleman from Worcester County, nor could he agree exactly with the sentiments of the Chairman of the committee to the end that free negroes should not be enslaved. The most reliable statistics showed that the slave population in the State had been increasing much more rapidly than the white population. Was it unjust, he would inquire, to make the negroes work when white men had to labor? Did not the latter have to encounter hardships? He would in-

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2. June 1841 (n.s. I, 1)--May 1861 (n.s. X, 24)

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