

WORK OF THE CONVENTION

The Convention met in the city of Annapolis on May 8, 1867. It was in session for 75 days, extending over a period of three months, exclusive of a ten days' recess. In an editorial praising the work of the Convention, The Sun gave the following resume of its achievements:

Among the important features which have heretofore had no place in our organic law are: The provision inserted in the legislative article "that no person shall be deemed incompetent as a witness on account of race or color, except hereafter so declared by act of the General Assembly;" the absence of any religious test except belief in the existence of God, moral accountability to Him, and a condition of reward or punishment in this or the world to come, in the qualifications for witnesses, jurors or the holding of office, and the prohibition against retrospective or expurgatorial oaths of any nature whatever. These desirable improvements are due to that enlightened state of public sentiment happily prevailing amongst the majority of the people of this State. In the Declaration of Rights the following important, and, in view of the occurrences of the past few years, eminently proper clause is inserted:

"Art. 44. That the provisions of the Constitution of the United States and of this State apply as well in time of war as in time of peace, and any departure therefrom or violation thereof, under the plea of necessity, or any other plea, is subversive of good government, and tends to anarchy and despotism."

As a necessary sequence to this section, it is further provided that under no circumstances shall the Legislature of this State pass any law suspending the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus. On the subject of slavery, the Convention, fully recognizing its destruction, has inserted in the Declaration of Rights the following article:

"Slavery shall not be re-established in this State, but having been abolished under the pol-