

perheads, "vipers that creep where man disdains to climb." I announced, and repeat it, that those papers having, at the outset of this war, uttered this falsehood, they have no resource left to-day but to be consistent in the lie, when the result of the votes shows that the sentiment of the army is against them, but to state now that the election was a fraud and a farce, because they have all the time stated that certain regiments here and there throughout the country were largely democratic, as they call them—largely copperhead. I know, and everybody else acquainted with the circumstances has known from the outset, that in a great many of those regiments this was a lie. But at that time there was no opportunity of proving the truth.

Mr. BERRY, of Prince George's. Will the gentleman give us the definition of a copperhead?

Mr. PUGH. No, sir, not now; I did just now. I said they were vipers who creep where man disdained to climb. That is the style of them. I was saying that at the outset of this war, having heard this announcement, I knew very well and others knew that they were falsehoods; but we did not then know that in the course of the terrible events through which we have been passing, the day would arrive which has arrived, in which the soldiers in the army could give expression to their true sentiments. Now that day has arrived, and that expression is upon the record. Hence those who uttered the falsehood have no recourse left, but must say that the election was a farce.

Their saying so does not make it so; and I defy the gentleman to show that his statement is correct as a statement independent of the newspapers. He is in a very safe position. He has seen it in certain newspapers. I do not doubt that. He may see a great many things in those certain newspapers. But is it true that these votes that have been cast in the army of the Potomac and in the western armies are not the true expression of the sentiment of those soldiers? I deny it. I challenge the gentleman to prove that there has ever been a soldier in any army of the United States who was not perfectly at liberty to vote as he pleased, just as much as if he was at home. An American soldier generally does that. I should think the gentleman from Anne Arundel had forgotten the character of the nation when he supposed for an instant that any commanding officer, any captain of a company, would dare to say to an American citizen in soldier's clothes, you have got to vote so and so. He little understands, in my judgment, the true character of the American captain or the American soldier. There is not a soldier in the ranks who would permit any such interference with his right of voting.

Mr. CUSHING. The opposition to every

single thing offered in this convention to support the government of the United States or the Union, has culminated to-day in the attack upon the army of the Union. I have thought for three years that the safeguard of this Union was its soldiers in arms at the front. I had thought that if gentlemen could speak so eloquently in favor of a republican form of government, we would in three years have had one word of praise for the men that were giving up everything to preserve our free government, and finally sealing their convictions with their blood. The experiment of republican government in which this country is now engaged, is being tried, not here upon the floor of this hall, but upon the line of the Potomac, and before Atlanta and Mobile. Republican government in danger from allowing the soldiers of the Union to vote? The men of whom the bulk of that army, who are American citizens, is composed, are quite as intelligent, quite as candid, inspired with quite as pure a patriotism, as even the gentleman from Anne Arundel (Mr. Miller.)

A comparison between the army of the Union as to-day constituted and the army of France, by an advocate of a republican form of government by a gentleman here, upon the ground of the last experiment vouchsafed or to be vouchsafed by the Omnipotent Creator of the human race, the experiment of republican government, who for three long years I guaranty has not uttered one word in defence of that army, not one word in defence of these principles as against their aggressors, coming here to-day and bidding you deprive the people of the United States of the right to vote! I say "people of the United States," because to-day the army of the United States is its people. There are more than votes enough in the army of the United States to change the whole destiny of this country; and they are Union men. You have withdrawn from the voting population of your country over one million of adult males, who have gone to the front to defend your institutions. And you are asked to throw the destinies of your land into the hands of the traitors that remain behind. You have taken the defenders of republican institutions to the front, and buried them under the sod, and thousands have been left unburied in the wilds of Virginia; and forsooth you are asked to allow the traitor at home to decide upon your institution.

This is not the verdict of the country. They do hold higher the man at the front than the man in the rear. They do hold higher the men who have endangered their lives in the front, than the man who can stand upon the floor of this convention and enunciate his belief in the utter falsehood that there has ever been an election in the armies of the United States at which any such words as he says he saw in the newspaper, and which by