

Mr. Ritchie believed as firmly as he was standing on this floor, from personal contact with those who were interested, that when he opposed this majority system he represented the voice of nineteen out of twenty lawyers of the city of Baltimore and of the entire bench of the city. He believed that his four colleagues who favored this system were almost the only members of the bar in favor of the system they had reported here.

Mr. Ritchie said his colleague, (Mr. Brown,) had alluded to the state of business in one of the courts of the city, but he (Mr. R.) contended that it was not the fault of the system, but of the judge, and all the outcry against the Criminal Court and its gross perversion to political purposes was not the fault of the system, but the man who administered it, and as to this he challenged contradiction. He spoke the voice of the people, bench and bar, when he asked this Convention not to uproot a system to which the community of Baltimore had become accustomed, and to which they were wedded. He asked this Convention if they could ignore the wishes of a majority of the people, and, in the words of his colleague, (Mr. Brown,) ascribe it toward clamor? Let them do it, but he asked if they could ignore the voice of the entire bar of Baltimore?

Mr. Dobbin asked by what right does any gentleman here claim to be the exponent of the views of the people of Baltimore, or to represent the voice of the bar? All such statements represent the mere personal assertion of the gentlemen who make them, and he contended that he had as much right to be believed as either of the gentlemen who had spoken. He asked what petitions had come up here against the majority report; what indications had they that the people were opposed to it? The gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) who opposed the plan as reported by the majority had received a letter from Judge Wylie, of Washington, who was personally acquainted with the practical workings of the system proposed by the majority, speaking in the most favorable terms of it, and he asked the gentleman to have it read.

The Convention then took a recess until 8 P. M.