

MR. DENNIS'S REPORT.

One of the committee to whom were referred certain memorials relating to a legislative call of a convention, has bestowed on them that consideration which their serious import demands, and begs leave to

Report, That he is constrained to dissent from the report of the two other members, who constitute a majority of the committee, and to state as briefly as possible, a few of the reasons of his dissent.

Our present State Constitution has now been in operation upwards of fifty four years, and under it during that time our State has enjoyed as great a portion of political, civil, and religious liberty as any other portion of the globe. She has increased in wealth and population, her agriculture has improved, her commerce extended, her manufactures been reared up and established. The equality of political rights enjoyed by her citizens is, among the citizens of many of our sister States, an object of desire and of envy. The framers of our State Constitution, aware that that instrument, like every other fundamental code would, from time to time, require alteration and amendment, have provided an easy mode for its gradual alteration and amendment. They wisely foresaw the hazard of, and carefully endeavored to prevent a recurrence to, a plan for the entire new modelling of our frame of government. They were experienced, practical, efficient statesmen, called in to public life, in extraordinary times, in times peculiarly adapted to call forth men of that description: such men in such times, the people will not, and feel they cannot, forbear to employ. The experience of past and present times evince that on more ordinary occasions, when a code of fundamental laws is about to be adopted by a free people, political theorists, men though commendable for their attachment to the cause of freedom, and their hatred of tyranny, and privileged order, yet filled with visionary notions, relative to the construction of free constitutions, the Lockes and the Seges's are the most frequently resorted to. John Locke, the best of men, the subtlest of metaphysicians, the most ardent of the devotees to the cause of freedom,