

ject which he (Mr. B.) had in view. This he proceeded to show. He also submitted that the amendment suggested by the gentleman from Frederick, (Mr. THOMAS,) was embraced in his (Mr. B.'s) proposition. He submitted with great deference to the opinions of gentlemen having more experience than himself, that there was no substantial reason for going into Committee, and that the reasons applicable in that report to ordinary parliamentary bodies, did not apply to this Convention.

The question was then taken on the first branch of the order, and, by yeas 42, noes 31, it was adopted.

Mr. BROWN suggested to Mr. BRENT to withdraw the second branch of the order.

Mr. BRENT acquiescing in the suggestion—

The second branch of the order was withdrawn.

Mr. BLAKISTONE offered the following order, which was adopted.

Ordered, That the Secretary of this Convention cause the rules as amended, to be printed for the use of the members of this body.

The Convention hereupon passed to the orders of the day.

BASIS OF REPRESENTATION.

The PRESIDENT announced the order of the day to be the following resolution reported on Wednesday, Dec. 11, by Mr. MERRICK, from the Committee on Representation.

1. Resolved, That it is expedient to regard federal numbers in finding the estimates and basis of representation in the House of Delegates.
2. Resolved, That it is inexpedient to adopt a principle of representation, based exclusively upon popular numbers in organizing the House of Delegates or the Senate.

The resolutions having been read—

Mr. SOLLERS moved that they be referred to a committee of the whole; for (said Mr. S.) if we are to discuss abstractions, I think we had better do so in Committee.

Mr. DENT. I hope the Convention will not agitate the discussion of this question at the present time. I do not see any good that can result from so doing. For my own part, I should greatly prefer that there should be some practical proposition submitted to our consideration before an effort is made to discuss merely abstract principles. This question of representation, is one to which more importance is attached than to any other upon which this Convention will be called upon to act.

Mr. SOLLERS. That is the very reason why it should be discussed in Committee.

Mr. DENT. I can only express the hope that my suggestion may be adopted, and if in order, I will move a postponement.

Mr. SOLLERS. I have no objection to that, and if the gentleman will make such a motion as he indicates, I will withdraw mine.

Mr. DENT. I move that the consideration of this subject be postponed until the 15th day of February.

Mr. MERRICK said, he should not object to any disposition which the Convention might think proper to make of the resolutions. They had been reported by the Committee on Representation, of which he was Chairman—the first by a unanimous vote, and the second with only one dissenting voice. The object of the Report was to endeavor to obtain the judgment of the Convention on these two controlling principles as the basis of any detailed plan which might be reported here, and within the circumference of which some plan might be laid down. These two great principles would have to be fixed at last, before any plan could be decided upon. As to the mere question whether the report should be considered now, or a fortnight hence, he was indifferent.

In regard to the first resolution as to the mode of computing population, there would probably be no great diversity of opinion, for he presumed that the Convention would, by a large majority, if not by a unanimous vote, decide that it was inexpedient to have regard to federal numbers in fixing the basis of representation.

Mr. SOLLERS said, he had made the motion to go into committee, for the very reason assigned, that this was a most important and vital question—the most vital and important of all the objects for which this Convention had been called—if he knew any thing as to what these objects were. If any subject should be discussed in committee of the whole, where greater latitude of debate was allowed than in Convention, this was that very subject. He saw no reason why it should be postponed, though he was willing that it should be, if the House thought proper.

Mr. CHAMBERS, of Kent, said he thought it was impossible for the committee on representation to act until the Convention had first acted in the form of instructions to them. So conflicting were the views entertained by the members of the committee, that they could only be reconciled by some agency which would control their decision and compel the surrender of some of these opinions. That agency could only be found in the Convention itself. These principles had to be fixed. That was a necessary preliminary to the action of the Convention, and he could see no good reason why a decision upon it should be delayed. He admitted that the question was one of great importance, though he might not go so far as some gentlemen who thought it the most important upon which the Convention would be called to act. If, as had been said, it was an abstraction, putting it off would not make it less so. He asked the yeas and nays on the motion to postpone.

Mr. BROWN suggested that the day designated in the motion to postpone was two distant, but thought it would be well that the Convention, before taking up so important a subject, should dispose of the report of the committee on the elective franchise which had been made the special order for Monday, so that there might be no interference. In the meantime the Convention could occupy itself in the consideration of other matters.