

Messrs. BRENT, of Baltimore city, RANDALL, and SAPPINGTON.

BASIS OF REPRESENTATION.

The Convention thereupon resumed the consideration of the resolutions reported by Mr. MERRICK, from the committee on representation.

The pending question was on the motion of Mr. SPENCER, to recommit the report to the committee on representation, with instructions to report a basis of representation on some fair principle of compromise.

Mr. CHAMBERS, of Kent, enquired of the President, whether it would now be in order to move an amendment.

The PRESIDENT replied in the affirmative.

Mr. CHAMBERS. Then I move the following amendment:

"In such manner that the city of Baltimore shall be entitled to the same number of representatives in the House of Delegates, as may be allowed to the largest county in the State."

I have no desire, (remarked Mr. C.) to discuss this question at the present time, but I hope that it will be left open to discussion, and that the previous question will not be called; so that if gentlemen desire to discuss it, they may have the opportunity to do so.

Mr. THOMAS said, he would make a last effort upon this point, as to the mode of proceeding, which should be adopted. He entered his protest against permitting one particular committee to depart in any way from the rule prescribed by the Convention for the government of all its committees.

Mr. THOMAS stated that the committee on Representation had departed from its proper course. For several long, tedious weeks, the Convention had had no report of a practical character before them, nothing but these abstract resolutions. And if the Convention were about to go into the discussion of them, long, tedious weeks might again be wasted without reaching any result. He objected to the way in which the members of the Judiciary came in, for the purpose of feeling their way by offering amendment after amendment, until they could shape the resolution to their wishes. Had the Legislative committee, of which his colleague was a member, pursued a similar course, a great deal of time would have been lost in settling negative propositions, which, ingeniously introduced, necessarily lead to new discussions. The clear-headed gentleman from Queen Annes, (Mr. GRASON,) had introduced a rule, which was adopted by the Convention, restricting the reports of the committees to mere results. The object of this rule was to expedite the work. He illustrated the evil which would result from adopting the course proposed by this amendment. The Convention would make little progress; amendments would be offered, and the representation of a single county would occupy one day, and another would consume the next day, and so the Convention would go on. He wished the Committee to execute the order of the Convention. He replied to the remark of the gentleman from

Kent, (Mr. CHAMBERS,) that the responsibility of making the report rested on him, and that the Convention was not bound by it, by reminding that gentleman of the practice of the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, where the Chairman of a committee makes an elaborate report, which he has prepared on his own responsibility, while every individual member of the committee may rise in his place and make any objections in the form of explanation. If the gentleman from Kent was permitted to hold the Convention, until he could produce the effect he desired by the propositions he offered, he, [Mr. T.] might be compelled, in consequence of the introduction of matter, which, in his opinion, was objectionable, to vote against the Constitution altogether, when the Convention closed their work. He might refuse to receive the little good which was mixed up with so much evil. What then was the use of keeping these propositions back in the committee? Let them be brought before the House.

He adverted to the various propositions now before the House, and asked what real progress would have been made, if any of them were adopted. He desired that the Committee should come in with a report, and that every member of it, who objected to it, should state what those objections were. With a report from the committee in a proper form, the House would have something to act on.

Mr. THOMAS moved the previous question, but, The PRESIDENT having stated that, under the amendment recently adopted to the rules, the previous question would operate not on the motion to commit but on the amendment of Mr. CHAMBERS.

Mr. T. disclaiming any intention to cut off debate on the amendment, withdrew the demand for the previous question.

Mr. GWINN accorded with the views thrown out by the gentleman from Frederick, and expressed his hope that the senior member of the Committee would make a report, and that any member of the Committee would be permitted to rise and explain his objections. He believed that was the course approved by a majority of the Committee, several of whom were now absent. He thought the proposition of the gentleman from Kent was of an uncertain character. That gentleman had denominated his (Mr. G's) proposition an abstraction, but would the amendment offered by the gentleman himself, lead to a practical result? He was yet unable to perceive the trap which was contrived by the amendments. The object, evidently, was to produce combinations among the counties, the effect of which would act injuriously on the prospects of Baltimore in the State. Long experience had made the gentleman from Kent a great tactician, but ingenious as he was in his movements, the object of the present amendment was very palpable. He believed that if the report was now re-committed, there would be a speedy report. Some of the members are indeed away, but they would be back on Monday morning, and he thought they could come to an agreement.

Mr. McLANE, without intending to enter into