very clearly pointed out that the rule would allow a small proportion of the Convention when it happened to be thin, to reverse the action of a very large and overwhelming majority, and thus, that majority might be taken by surprise.

The gentleman from Baltimore city, (Mr. Brent,) acknowledged that he had misunderstood the rule, and was corrected. He misunderstood it again, and was again corrected. He had been reminded of the familiar saying—

> "A man convinced against his will,
> Is of the same opinion still."

The gentleman from Baltimore city had said, that there were no precedents for this. There was the best of all precedents, in the very act about to be adopted in the Constitution, that it should require a majority of all the members elected to each branch of the legislature, to pass any law which with a *viva voce* vote on all questions of importance would greatly restrain the loose and neglected manner in which many laws had heretofore been passed.

He hoped no article of the new Constitution would be adopted, unless it had a majority of the whole number of the members of the Convention.

The object of that rule was to prevent a minority from adopting a bill and passing it. That was not the case with the Convention. A question might be considered and fully discussed, and might be decided upon in the morning, and later in the day, when but fifty-two were present, the same measures might be over-ruled. He would not pretend to say, or to intimate, that there was a single member of the Convention who would intentionally take advantage of such circumstances; but the Convention should place itself in a position so as not to be subject to this continual vacillation. In regard to the idea that the Convention would be tying up their hands, and have no opportunity to discuss the measures, the simple motion to reconsider would open the whole question to debate. If the motion to reconsider should be grounded upon considerations which ought to have weight, it would always be in the power of members, to bring those arguments before the Convention.

Mr. Bowie would very cheerfully go for the rule proposed by the gentleman from Kent, (Mr Chambers ) but that it violated a fundamental principle which he could not disregard. He held that a quorum, being a majority of the body, had a right to pass any law they pleased. A majority in any legislative body, ought always to prevail. But the rule of the gentleman from Kent, required something besides a majority. Although there might be a decided majority in favor of reconsideration, yet if that majority was not equal to and did not exceed that which passed the measure, the motion to reconsider would be lost. He was utterly opposed to such an innovation upon the great cardinal principle, that the majority should rule, and he believed the innovation would be fraught with dangers and with infinite mischief. To get rid of all this, he proposed to go back to the original rules, so as to allow no one to move a reconsideration, who had not voted in the majority. Much mischief had already been done, by allowing the minority to overrule what the majority had done, and this proposition was to go back to the original question.

Mr. Phelps raised the question of order, whether this amendment could be introduced without one day's notice, the amendment proposing to change another rule from that under consideration.

Mr. Bowie remarked that the notice having been given to the Convention, that the rules would be considered to-day, the House had jurisdiction over the whole subject.

Mr. Chambers said that to obviate the necessity of discussing a question of order, he would state that he should decline under any circumstances, to accept the proposition, one contingency existing as at present. That portion of the rule with which gentlemen were dissatisfied, had been adopted at the suggestion of a distinguished gentleman from Frederick, not now in his seat, (Mr. Thomas.) He should be very unwilling to have the rule rescinded in the absence of that gentleman. There was no such pressing necessity as to require action upon it, in the absence of the gentleman who had suggested it.

To meet the case which had been shown to be possible, that there would be 52 upon one side and 51 upon the other, and but one member should change his opinion, he had modified his proposition so that whenever a question should have been decided by yeas and nays, no motion to reconsider should prevail unless there should be cast in favor of the reconsideration, a number of votes at least equal to the number of votes given by the majority on the original question.

He would suggest the propriety of allowing the question of a change in the rule, lie until the arrival of the gentleman from Frederick, when it would be taken up and acted upon.

Mr. Gwinn moved the previous question.

Mr. Chambers moved that the whole subject lie upon the table for the present.

Mr. Gwinn thereupon withdrew the call for the previous question.

The question being taken upon laying upon the table, it was agreed to—ayes 38; noes not counted.

Mr. Dorsey rose for the purpose of giving notice of his intention to offer an amendment to the 17th rule—it being the rule which authorised the call for the previous question. He said that he had noticed much inconvenience resulting from the manner in which the rule was made to operate. Many members after making speeches, were in the habit, without allowing an opportunity to reply to their arguments, of moving the previous question. His amendment, if adopted, would prevent this.

Mr. D. read his amendment as follows:

"But no member who has discussed any subject before the Convention, shall be permitted to move the previous question thereon, until at least two or more members have had an opportunity of replying to the mover of the previous question."