

circumstances required and justified such a proceeding. And that the Legislature should be empowered, at all times, to call a Convention of the people without any respect to periodical limitations of ten years or any other number of years.

Now, that seemed to him, (Mr. B.,) all that any reasonable man could desire, but to force it down us, and to make it a constitutional provision that there should be a Convention every ten years, or that the sense of the people should be taken every ten years on that subject, whether they desired it or not, was a little too strong for him, and he believed for all portions of the State, except Baltimore city.

Mr. BRENT, of Baltimore city, said some gentlemen were too apt to get up and address the Convention without really understanding the subject under discussion. Now the gentleman [Mr. Bowie,] undertook to tell us what? That he had prejudged the question without having himself understood it. There might be but three radical members, including himself, (Mr. B.,) to vote for this proposition. If he had the reputation of being designated in this Convention as a radical, or a red republican, because he would confide in the people, having every reliance in their judgment and integrity, then he was willing to be so regarded, if that was to be considered as red republicanism. The gentleman [Mr. Bowie,] was willing to take an antagonistic position, and he was welcome to do so. He [Mr. B.,] did not mean to say that his proposition was right as to the details; but if wrong in any particular, it could be amended. What, he asked, were the principles of this proposition? Not that the people should be compelled to call a Convention, but that they should periodically express their wish for or against a Convention. What objection could there be to the people of Maryland casting their votes at the ballot box, in a regular election, for or against a Convention? Was there any man opposed to that? Now, the gentleman desired the matter to be referred to the Legislature. He desired that the proposition submitted by Mr. SOLLERS, the chairman of this committee, should be adopted by the Convention, and that the Legislature should call a Convention for that purpose. How many years of anxiety had passed before we could procure a Legislative act to bring together a Convention to form a Constitution? He was himself of the opinion, and he had already expressed it, that a Legislative act was necessary, in the future, to procure legal proof of the will of the people who had in themselves full and sovereign power to alter, change, or abolish the existing government. Hence he would like to see such a provision incorporated in this Constitution, to secure a legal mode of revolutionising or changing the government whenever the people chose. He cared not how long the article should be to carry out this provision. He desired to see this high privilege accorded to the people of Maryland, to be exercised every ten years, or whenever they might think proper. They were the proper judges, and let them decide the question at the ballot box. He

did not desire to force it upon the people against the will of the majority. If the votes cast should be against a Convention—if it was not considered necessary by them, then the Governor should simply make proclamation to that effect. But if in favor of a Convention, then the Governor was enjoined by the Constitution to call a special election, and notify the people to vote for Delegates, with the representation of each city and county in the Legislature, according to whatever system of representation might then exist, and this he [Mr. Brent,] adopted, because he presumed no more popular basis could be got for the Convention, and the Governor is then to fix a day for the Convention to assemble. And finally, the article provides that the Convention should not sit longer than a certain time—six months. Now the difference between his proposition and the one before the Convention, proposed by the majority of the committee, was this, that his [Mr. Brent's,] protects and guarantees, independent of Legislative action, to the people of Maryland, this great right, while the other plan leaves this right dependant on the action of a Legislature, which he [Mr. Brent] was unwilling to trust. He thought the adoption of his [Mr. B's,] proposition would do much to reconcile the people to the new Constitution, which came from this body. This would be a great answer to all objections, as the people had a right to say whether, in ten years hence, they would decide to alter the basis of representation, or change the Constitution in other respects, and this great popular right must be protected and placed out of the reach of an anti-reform majority in the Legislature.

Mr. SOLLERS said, after reciting the terms of the substitute offered by the gentleman from Baltimore, (Mr. Brent,) for the report of the committee on the further amendments and revisions of the Constitution, that the only distinction between it and the one offered by the gentleman from Allegany, (Mr. Fitzpatrick,) was in employing a different agent to effect the same object. Now, it was provided in the report which he had made on the subject of future amendments to the Constitution, that any part of it might be altered, changed or abolished by the Legislature; provided, bills were published three months before a new election, and they be confirmed by the next General Assembly after a new election of delegates; or, after a Convention had been called for that purpose, three months previous notice having been given before a new election, and that act on to be confirmed by the next Legislature. Now, he would ask his friend from Baltimore city, whether he did not believe that at the very next session of the Legislature it would not be deemed necessary by it that some other changes and alterations should be made in the Constitution? They might be changes immaterial in their character that would be suggested, and not such as to require a Convention for that purpose. The gentleman, (Mr. Brent,) had asked what objection there could be to his plan. He, (Mr. S.,) thought there were several; but he put his own chiefly on the ground of conveni-