

Mr. HOWARD. But they believe in the existence of a Deity, and so do the other men of whom I am speaking.

Mr. CHAMBERS. The Jews believe in revealed religion.

Mr. HOWARD said that take the case of a man who for all practical purposes, rejected the new testament. Well, if he were a Jew, he would be admitted to office; but as he is not, they would not admit him. He desired to know any reasonable distinction why one man was fit to hold an office, while the other was not? He could not trace out the rule to show why one man was to hold office, and the other was not fit to hold office, when they both believe the same doctrines. A person was declared to be a good witness or juror who believed in the existence of a God, to whom he would be morally accountable for his acts, and this appeared to be the only proper test for any office-holder whatever.

Another objection he had to the proposition was, that it was totally beyond the spirit of the age in which we live. They were going to disqualify a class of men from holding office in the State, when any one of these men could become President of the United States, a member of Congress, or judge of the Supreme Court of the United States, or fill any of the offices under the federal government, yet they fixed a stamp of disapprobation on these men, and said that they should not hold any petty office in this State.

Mr. CHAMBERS. Would the gentleman vote for any infidel for President of the United States?

Mr. HOWARD replied that he would not; but they should allow the people to elect him if they chose. As for himself he would frankly say that he had subscribed to belief in the christian religion fifty times in all the offices he had held.

He believed in it most humbly and reverentially. He took up the Bible and formed his own creed, and went by nobody else's. Whilst he claimed this right for himself, he was willing to allow it to others, and not willing to stigmatize a class of men, to whom all the avenues to office were open under the federal government. He had still another objection—that a religious test has no connexion with the business of a civil government. If they carried it through one branch of civil policy, they should carry it through all. Were bank directors and railroad directors, and all who helped to administer the government, unfit for office, because they were not compelled to say that they believed in the christian religion? Could they not carry on the business of the bank just as well? Could not a man make laws for the creation of a court of justice, could not judges decide cases just as well without taking this test? If a man worshipped God after his own manner of belief, how did that disqualify him from making laws for a community, or from deciding questions of right and wrong. He wondered if gentlemen had ever read the old test of 1716, adopted in the reign of Queen Anne, the first time the Episcopal church was ever connected with the State of

Maryland by law. If they had ever read that law, they would see what test oaths were there, and might be again. For this was but an association of the same power in the civil government. If they had the power to do this, they would certainly have the power to adopt that old test, or any other test, but he believed they had no such power.

Mr. SPENCER made some remarks, which will be published hereafter.

Mr. BRENT, of Baltimore city, moved the previous question, which was seconded, and the main question ordered, viz:

“Will the Convention reconsider their vote on the thirty-third article of said report?”

Mr. CHAMBERS, of Kent, moved that the question be taken by yeas and nays, which being ordered, appeared as follows:

*Affirmative*—Messrs. Chapman, Pres't, Morgan, Blakistone, Dent, Ricaud, Lee, Chambers of Kent, Donaldson, Kent, Sellman, Weems, Dalrymple, Bond, Sollers, Brent of Charles, Bell, Colston, Dashiell, Williams, Hodson, Goldsborough, Phelps, Miller, Bowie, Sprigg, McCubbin, Bowling, Spencer, Grason, George, Wright, Dirickson, McMaster, Jacobs, Sappington, Stephenson, Carter, Stewart of Caroline, Hardcastle, Schley, Fiery, Neill, Davis, Kilgour, Brewer, Waters and Smith—47.

*Negative*—Messrs. Dorsey, Wells, Randall, Howard, Buchanan, Welch, Ridgely, Lloyd, Sherwood of Talbot, Eccleston, McCullough, McLane, Thomas, Shriver, Gaither, Biser, Annan, McHenry, Magraw, Nelson, Thawley, Gwinn, Stewart of Baltimore city, Brent of Baltimore city, Ware, John Newcomer, Harbine, Michael Newcomer, Anderson, Weber, Hollyday, Parke, Ege, Shower, Cockey and Brown—36.

So the Convention reconsidered their vote on said article.

The question then recurred on the adoption of of the amendment offered by Mr. CHAMBERS of Kent.

Mr. CHAMBERS wished to express a single idea. If every man in the country knew, that if he made open profession of infidelity, it would debar him from admission to any office; it would seal his lips, and prevent him from preaching his sentiments to the weak minded and ignorant. Children would thus be left to grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, without temptation from this source. If they could only make the infidel keep his tongue within his lips, it would accomplish an immense amount of good.

Mr. DORSEY argued against the provision. The christian religion was no part of a law of the land; for a man could be a judge without believing a word in it. He proceeded to show the extent to which this principle had been carried when Church and State were connected together in England, even when the Protestant Episcopal religion was the law of the land, condemning to death, without benefit of clergy, one who denied the divinity of the Saviour. He urged that the Deity had wisely reserved to himself and to his selected agents, the business of extending