

Which was read.

Mr. Devecon from same committee presented the following Minority Report.

*To the Honorable, the Speaker,  
and Members of the House of Delegates :*

The undersigned, the minority of the Committee on the Judiciary, begs leave to submit the following report upon the modification of the Sunday Law, with the accompanying bill.

In the early part of the present session leave was granted to introduce a bill looking to a modification of the law, and was referred to the Committee on Judicial Proceedings. While the election was pending last fall, a modification of the Sunday Law was an exciting element in the contest in some portions of the State, the German vote numbering over fifteen thousand, and in the county of one of the undersigned, (Allegany county,) numbering over twelve hundred voters, distinguished for their thrift, perseverance and industry, and for all those qualities which constitute the good citizen, with almost singular unanimity, favor some modification. One of the undersigned, during the late canvass, pledged himself to introduce a bill for a modification, even if it alienated the puritanical portion of his constituency, because he believed that some modification was eminently proper and just.

The undersigned have given the subject some thought and reflection, and will endeavor to present the views that influenced them in favoring a modification of the existing Sabbath Law, in as brief and condensed form as possible. The undersigned adhere firmly to the doctrine that the people "that are governed least are governed best," and that "the sternness and rigor of law is but one step removed from the severity of oppression." In enunciating the sentiments which control our political action, we do not mean to be understood as dispensing with laws necessary for every well governed community, nor do we design to alter or modify any law which has had a beneficial and moral influence on society, but we do deny that the statute now in existence, framed by their creators for restraining intemperance, has had the effect contemplated by their advocates. The first stringent law prohibiting the sale of liquor on the Sabbath day was enacted in 1847; from what we have learned from members of the legal profession, actively engaged in the practice of their profession at that time, the criminal dockets of the counties and the city of Baltimore were filled with indictments against parties charged with the violation of the law, the several courts and avenues thereto were lined with the lowest and most degraded class of the community, which