

We will now examine the act conferring the power, the means prescribed, the restrictions specified, and make an application of them to the means used and power exercised in order to arrive at just conclusions, and see whether perfect harmony is preserved.

We find in the section above referred to, power is given to the Legislature to change the Constitution; the *means* prescribed is, "a bill so to alter, &c." What is the meaning of "a bill so to alter, &c.?" Does it mean an ambiguous, uncertain, doubtful, circuitous, contingent, delusive act of the Legislature, upon which no human intellect can settle, with any degree of certainty and precision? Does it mean by the most latitudinarian construction the transfer of power from the Legislature, and a reference to the people of any particular section or division of the State not known to the Constitution, except as a constituent part of the great body politic? Or does it mean a positive, unconditional, absolute act of the Legislature, bearing the impress of certainty, which only needs a constitutional confirmation, to effect the change specified? an act in regard to which the mind can come to some definite and reasonable conclusion. The latter definition seems to your Committee to be the legitimate construction of the term used, as in accordance with both the letter and the spirit of the Constitution.

The fifty-ninth section proceeds, "Shall pass the General Assembly, and be published at least three months before a new election of delegates, and shall be confirmed by the General Assembly after a new election of delegates in the first session after such new election." Here then are the restrictions imposed, rejecting all idea of a reference to any portion of the people for their express action.

The reasons which induced the framers of the Constitution to require a confirmatory act, appear to your Committee to be as follows: first, That sudden and precipitate changes should not be produced, cal-