

people constitute *the supreme power*. And is there anything novel in such a doctrine? Do not the authorities all sustain it? Is it not the doctrine of the first and best men of the country? Was it not endorsed by the statesmen of the revolution? It is the foundation on which our whole system rests. It is the rock on which he rested all his faith. By what authority are we now convened in this Convention? Is it not by virtue of the will of the majority? Will any one say that we are assembled in Convention, under the Constitution? Certainly the gentleman from Kent, will not say so, for he looks to the majority of the people to sanction what we may do, and to acquiescence by the government to give it validity. Has the spirit of insubordination exhibited itself here? Are we the creatures of the mob? And if we, the representatives of the people, can thus assemble to deliberate peacefully on the change of government, and the formation of a new organic law, what right have we to distrust the same quiet exercise of the same power in future? Thrice have the people of this State, met in Convention, above and without any constitutional provisions to guide them. Amidst the war of the revolution, they framed the Constitution under which, with alterations, we have lived to the present. In 1788, they ratified, in Convention, the Constitution of the United States. And they have again met in this Convention. Each and all of these Conventions were by virtue of the supreme power of the people. In each case it was discreetly and prudently exercised. Why then distrust the prudence of the people? I have no fear of the result. He would then unhesitatingly support the amendment of his friend, (Mr. Presstman.) And he would, with equal pleasure, support the amendment of the gentleman from Cecil, (Mr. McLane.)

The first amendment asserts the right of the people, and the second declares it to be our duty to provide a remedy, for the exercise of the right. This was what he desired. He was for indicating and following the mode prescribed in the Constitution. It was convenient and desirable, and he had no doubt would prove satisfactory to the people—*the whole people*. To the amendment of the gentleman from Kent, he was opposed, because, whilst it admits the right, it fetters it in its exercise. In the same breath that it admits, it denies and restricts it.

Mr. BRENT of Baltimore city, said, he had desired and intended to have submitted some remarks. But as he supposed that the Convention must be wearied of the long discussion which had taken place on this question, he would forego his right, and call for the previous question.

Mr. McLANE enquired of the chair, what the main question would be.

The PRESIDENT replied, that the pending question was on the amendment of the gentleman from Kent, (Mr. Chambers.)

Mr. McLANE. I can only say that if that proposition should not prevail, I shall offer the amendment which I indicated on Friday last.

Some conversation followed when, for purposes of explanation,

Mr. BRENT withdrew the demand for the previous question.

Mr. CHAMBERS of Kent, withdrew his amendment for the purpose of enabling the gentleman from Cecil, (Mr. McLane,) to offer the proposition he had indicated.

Mr. C. in withdrawing the amendment, gave notice that he should vote for the amendment of the gentleman from Cecil, (Mr. McLane,) with the intention, after that had been adopted, of voting against the whole proposition.

So the amendment of Mr. CHAMBERS was withdrawn.

And therefore, the question recurred on the amendment of Mr. PRESSTMAN.

Mr. McLANE then moved to amend that amendment, by adding at the end thereof, the following:

“Provision ought therefore to be made in the Constitution now to be formed, whereby the exercise of such right, at reasonable periods, and in Conventional Assemblies, would be secured and regulated.”

Mr. PRESSTMAN accepted this amendment, as a modification of his own proposition.

Mr. JENIFER said, he had intended to vote for the amendment of the gentleman from Cecil, (Mr. McLane,) and then to vote against both propositions. He also intended to vote against the amendment of the gentleman from Kent, (Mr. Chambers,) because he, (Mr. J.) believed the whole provision to be in the bill of rights.

Mr. DORSEY proposed to offer an amendment upon which he was proceeding to make some remarks—

Mr. BRENT of Baltimore city, submitted that the previous question had been withdrawn by him, not for the purpose of general discussion, but for explanation merely.

Mr. DORSEY yielded the floor.

Mr. BRENT moved the previous question.

And the question having been taken the Convention refused to second the demand for the previous question.

The question then recurred on the modified amendment of Mr. PRESSTMAN.

Mr. DORSEY then offered the following as an amendment to the modified amendment of Mr. PRESSTMAN.

Insert after the words “they have,” in the first line the following: “according to the mode prescribed in this Constitution, and the laws made in pursuance thereof.”

Mr. DORSEY desired to say a few words on the subject of his amendment. The amendment of the gentleman from Cecil did not, in his opinion, accomplish the object which that gentleman, as he understood him, professed to have in view. The proposition he now offered, was restriction of the manner in which the Constitution might be amended. He asked the gentleman from Cecil if it was acceptable to him. (Mr. McLane indicated his dissent.) He understood that it was not. He knew not why, unless the gentleman from Cecil was aiming at a different object from that of which he supposed him to be in the