

tions. If, therefore, he should succeed in his amendment, the effect is to be, that we admit those only who are either ignorant, or regardless of their solemn vows and duties.

Now, would the gentleman, or would the Convention, be willing to put into the Constitution a provision, directing in terms that ministers, unworthy of the character they bear, and none others, should be considered proper candidates for these responsible offices? Certainly not. Then why should they adopt a provision, the necessary and practical effect of which, would be precisely the same? The gentleman had used one expression, the force of which he could not have duly considered. He had deplored the exclusion of his clerical brethren from the participation of the "loaves and fishes"—the significant expression by which John Randolph defined office and emolument.

Did the gentleman mean to intimate that ministers of the gospel were to be influenced by such sordid motives, as to neglect the spiritual interests of immortal souls to secure the paltry sum of four dollars a day? Or did he suppose the Convention capable of being influenced by a desire to secure it for laymen exclusively? Surely not.

He would remark, in answer to what the gentleman had said about lawyers, that it would have been more candid, if he had stated, what he and every other minister must know, that the persons alluded to in the texts he has referred to, were "Doctors of Divinity"—teachers of Divine law—not such persons as are now known by the term lawyers.

Having passed his whole life at the bar and bench, he might be permitted to add a word in defence of lawyers as a body. He would remark to the gentleman, that he who assailed them would be apt to get a hornet's nest about him in the first place, and would fail to enlist public sentiment in the next. There were, undoubtedly, bad men in the profession. So there were bad men in every profession and department of life. But as a body—as a class—they were entitled to as much respect as any other class of citizens. It was, perhaps, not saying more than history and fact would justify, to assert that they were the authors and effective promoters of all the great political movements which had ameliorated the condition of man, in his civil and political relations; the pioneers in all the great struggles for freedom against tyranny. It was, then, so far from being true, that this long standing provision, which excludes preachers from the legislative hall, originated in the want of proper regard and respect for the ministerial office, that the motive was to preserve it pure and blameless.

It was asked, why not protect them? We did give them the protection best suited to their wants—protection against the vices, the snares, the temptations incident to political life. We have too much need for their valuable services, in restraining our own violations of the pure precepts which would make saints of sinners, too much interest to have them possess the virtues they should teach to us, to expose them to the contaminating influences of a life of politics. Their duty is to advocate the interests of their master, not their

own—to warm our hearts with love to God, not devotion men—to inspire us with hopes of heaven, not of office—to minister to the poor, the humble, the sick, the dying, and to talk to them of the vanity of all things temporal; not to company with the rich, the great, the influential men of the world, and court their aid, to robe themselves in the glittering baubles of this world's honor, or fill their pockets with the maxam of unrighteousness.

Mr. CHANDLER, in reply, adverting to what the gentleman from Kent had said on the subject of cutting the clergy horizontally, said the gentleman had stated that the bad ministers would be thrown on one side of the line, and the good on the other, if his amendment should prevail. But he thought the argument did not make against the proposition, because, if the amendment did not prevail, the clergyman who was not conscientious about the matter, could now, if elected, present his credentials to the church and take his seat, because then he would have a right to it. He could not but be struck with the affectionate regard which the gentleman from Kent expressed for ministers of religion. He said they stood on too high a platform. He presumed that the gentleman supposed they must wear long faces and a sanctimonious aspect, which would be outraged by their association with members of the Legislature. And in what light did the gentleman place legislators? It would appear that they are all covered with mud and dust, and he would not let us come into the body and mix with such corruption. He certainly felt some surprise at the acknowledgment. But he would beg leave to remind the gentleman from Kent, that those who formed the Constitution of the United States did not feel the force of such scruples as the committee who prepared the Legislative Report did, on this subject. That Constitution was formed by some of the wisest men the country had ever produced, yet it contained no such disqualifying provision. And although it was not of frequent occurrences, it was well known that ministers of religion had had seats in Congress; and, if he was not mistaken, there was one, or perhaps two ministers in Congress, at this time.

Mr. CHAMBERS. Yes, there is Mr. Palfrey.

Mr. CHANDLER. He is an abolitionist.

Mr. CHANDLER now modified his amendment so as to strike out to the word "and" in the second line of the section.

Mr. BUCHANAN said:

Before the vote was taken on this proposition he desired to put a few questions, and to make a remark or two to his friend and colleague, (Mr. Chandler,) for whom he took the opportunity to say, he entertained the highest personal regard.

It so happened, said Mr. B., that during the address of his friend, he, [Mr. B.,] was so circumstanced, (being in the temporary occupancy of the Chair,) as to render it impossible for him with propriety to put a question to his friend, which, if at the time he could have put, would have saved him the necessity of saying any thing at present.

His colleague had remarked, that some eigh-