

ence, it being predicated upon the fifty-ninth article of the Constitution. By his, [Mr. S's.] provision, he gave the people the supreme right to change their Constitution to suit themselves. The question of amendment was left entirely open. Now, the gentleman [Mr. Brent] asked what was the inconvenience of submitting the question to the people, of amendments to the Constitution, so frequently as he proposed? With him, (Mr. Sollers,) it was an objection he could not lose sight of in the discharge of his public duty.

He objected to the eternal periodical question of reform. Every ten years, it seemed, that Maryland was to be excited from one end to the other, and all kinds of passions and prejudices were to be appealed to, and consequently, as a matter of course, we might expect new and extraordinary changes. That was what he disliked and abhorred. The gentleman from Baltimore city had said, we had had a long struggle for the purpose of calling a Convention, and that it was necessary that every ten years we should have a change in it. What, in God's name, to effect? What [he exclaimed] have you gentlemen reformers to gain, to profit, by amending the Constitution every ten years? You told the people of Maryland it was necessary that they should change their organic law, and you further told them that their original plan of government was not adapted to the progressive spirit of the age. And why did gentlemen of the reform party differ among themselves? The gentleman from Baltimore city would not vote for the new Constitution after all.

MR. BRENT, of Baltimore city. I have not said so.

MR. SOLLERS. I take it for granted.

MR. BRENT. I have never said so.

MR. SOLLERS, continuing. There was a party in Baltimore, and of which the gentleman was the distinguished leader, who it was said had threatened to upset the new Constitution, which this Convention had been six months tinkering at. It had been said that we had a miserable Constitution, and that it ought to be replaced by a new one as it was wholly inadequate to the advanced and advancing spirit and freedom of the age. It was further argued that it was only necessary for a Convention to meet here, when it could make a Constitution in one month. And it would cost six thousand dollars only; but it would, we might rest assured, cost the people one hundred thousand dollars, and then be not half as good as the old one. There was no difficulty in getting up an excitement in Baltimore city. Nothing was easier, and especially on a question of reform. He trusted in God that our successors, ten years hence, might be able to harmonise matters in reference to their labors, better than we have been. These were his reasons for going against the proposition of the gentleman from Baltimore city. It would be seen that he, (Mr. Sollers,) gave to the immediate representatives of the people time to remodel, by two successive acts of the Legislature, the Constitution of the State of Maryland. He had not been

fortunate enough to get his colleague to agree with him. It was his, (Mr. S's,) own plan, and he had submitted it only to one human being, and he had obtained his approbation to it, and now he, (Mr. S,) was willing that the Convention should take a vote on it.

MR. BRENT, of Baltimore city, said the gentleman's (Mr. Sollers') proposition differed in one respect from the fifty-ninth article of the existing Constitution. It said the Constitution might be altered in the way proposed, but it did not prohibit it in any other way, as it had been contended was done by the old fifty-ninth article. It was an improvement on the fifty-ninth article of the Constitution so far as this—but it differed in another respect; it gave the right to the Legislature expressly to call a Convention to amend or make a Constitution. But, he did not think it went far enough. Now, the gentleman had said, that his objection to his, (Mr. B's,) proposition was, that it secured the re-agitation of this question every ten years. Well, if it did, he was sure the gentleman was not afraid of the agitation of this question which concerned only the people themselves. He, (Mr. B,) thought the political waters should be moved periodically by fresh agitations; he would say that whenever old dynasties had become rotten and decayed, he was willing to see them changed.

MR. SOLLERS, (in his seat.) Why not every ten years?

MR. BRENT. Yes! oftener, if the people will ed it. He would be in favor of overhauling the Constitution frequently to meet the progressive wants of the age. He, (Mr. B) had never said he would not vote for the new Constitution. He had always declared on that floor that he did not regard the adjustment of this question of the basis of representation, as a *sine qua non*, and he had always said that he would decide on the Constitution as a whole; and until he saw it completed, as a whole, he had no opinion to express, but he regarded the engrafting on the Constitution of an article referring all future Conventions to the corruption, or caprice of a Legislature, would be to deprive the people of their rights and their wish, every ten years to have the Constitution amended, and tie them down, as heretofore, under the despotism of legislative majorities. So far as he might have objections to the new Constitution, he would regard them as much softened by referring the subject of Constitutional change to the people every ten years.

This would be far preferable to leave it for legislative tyranny, or legislative caprice to say whether there should be a Convention, or not. The gentleman, (Mr. Sollers,) had said the matter might be left to the Legislature—that you might enjoin it upon the Legislature to call a Convention—that the only difference between his, (Mr. B's,) proposition, and that submitted by the majority of the committee of which the gentleman was chairman, was, that it made it their imperative duty. Now, he, (Mr. B,) had only to say, that he would trust the Governor sooner than the Legislature, and he would trust him sooner for this reason—that he was elected by