

whether this had been sanctioned by the committee?

Mr. BOWIE replied that he knew but three or four gentlemen upon that floor who had undertaken to go to the trouble of sketching out their remarks. If the gentleman wished to know their names, he could mention them.

Mr. MAGRAW. It is not necessary.

Mr. BOWIE did not consider this as a departure from the terms of the contract, which provided that correct and substantial sketches should be given. No gentleman among those who were stated to have published their speeches at a greater length than they actually delivered them went beyond a correct and substantial report, and their speeches were not embraced in a much larger space than if they had been correctly and substantially reported by the Reporter himself. The sketches made by the Reporter himself, in nine cases out of ten, had actually been diminished. But these were propositions made by gentlemen themselves to the Reporter, which could not be resisted by him. No complaint had been made by any part of the Convention, and it did not seem altogether right for the Convention to blame the Reporter for that which a part of the Convention itself did. There was no sort of objection to this, but, on the contrary, it had met with the acquiescence of all.

Mr. CHAMBERS said, he could declare candidly, that in all the reports, he had seen but two instances in which speeches not delivered on the floor were found in the debates. He had made about as many as most of the members, and he could safely aver they were generally, as far as they went, in the language, and uniformly in substance, what he said in the House—nothing more or less. But if the reports were not always exact reports of what was said, it was not the fault of the Reporter. It was, as his friend from Prince George's said, the work of members, who amplified or abridged their notes received from the Reporter. Let this, however, be as it may, we are now informed that the Reporter could not perform the services required of him, for the sum stipulated, without serious loss. The question, then, is put to us, Will this body, the representatives of the liberal and generous citizens of Maryland, require an honest man to work for them, day by day, without compensation? For one, he should do no such thing. He would ask attention to another consideration. A large number of their constituents had subscribed and paid for copies of the Register of Debates. They had a right to expect them to be furnished. He believed their constituents generally would have some interest at least in some of the debates, but certainly these subscribers had evinced an interest.—Would it be proper—would it be fair—now to arrest their publication? He thought not. Believing, as he did, that "the laborer is worthy of his hire," and unwilling to arrest the means of information to the people of the State, who desired to know what we were doing and why we were doing it, he was for giving a just compensation to the Reporter.

One other idea, and he would ask for it the consideration of his friend from Harford, (Mr. Magraw,) than whom there was not on this floor a more amiable man, or one of kinder feelings. It was this: if we were to have long speeches, either on the floor or in the House, was it not as well, in many cases, to dispense with them here and have them put in the Register? Would not many in the Convention be well pleased with such an arrangement? Indeed, as a mere matter of economy, both as regards time and money, would not his friend agree that such a bargain would not be a bad one?

Mr. BRENT, of Baltimore city, rose for the purpose of giving the reasons which should influence his vote. In the first place they had the Reporter in their power, for the contract contained a clause providing that he was bound to report for them from that fund, regardless of the length of time they might remain in session. This was what the contract said. He would say that a man who made a contract of this kind acted under a moral *duress*. What *duress*? This: that a gentleman had been brought here, understanding that the Convention would employ him as their Reporter, by which he lost a most lucrative and profitable situation in Washington; for he had heard members of Congress say that they regarded him as the very best Reporter, and that his loss was very much deplored. At first the Convention refused to employ him, but finally retraced its steps, and secured his services. He regretted very much the mode in which the Reporter had been employed—merely to furnish sketches, reducing each speech three-fourths. He regretted that they had not pursued the policy of the Virginia Convention. Its debates were reported *verbatim et literalum*. Their reports were in full, and he believed they were published in all of the Richmond newspapers. This was the course which should have been pursued by this Convention.

What was the resolution? Nobody doubted the integrity, the fidelity, the industry of the Reporter. In the commencement of the session, all the sketches were published, he believed, without revision by members, and they did not see them until after they appeared in print. He discovered this plan of reducing the debates to one-fourth led to absurdities. In one instance, he was made to assert that minors were legal voters. In justice to himself, he afterwards told the Reporter that he would expect to revise the sketches of his remarks. He felt this to be due to himself, for the idea of having incorrect versions of his remarks circulated throughout the State was very unpleasant to him. Any gentleman could see that he had never put in three-fourths of what he said. It was difficult to say how much a man speaks. His friend from Harford could not say how much space on paper the remarks which he was now making would fill. He did not feel bound, as an honorable gentleman, to stand upon the letter of the contract and execute it; therefore, he should vote for the resolution. His great object in doing so would be to furnish light and diffuse intelligence among the people of the State. He desired that the people of Maryland should know the reasons which influenced this Convention in