

atory remarks. The gentleman from Baltimore city, (Mr. Frestman,) had maintained that it would be impracticable to make the laws so plain to every man, "that he who runs may read." He, (Mr. S.,) had seen a commentary in which it was maintained, that according to the original language of the phrase, it should be read "he who reads may run." With this revision, he might well apply it to the laws of the State. He, (Mr. S.,) had not, and would not, promise that his amendment, if adopted, would make every man a lawyer, but, he believed, it would prevent much unwise legislation, and would tend greatly to simplify the laws. Referring to his amendment, he said that he had looked into the Constitution of the State of Louisiana, and had found therein an article, that embraced much of the principle of his amendment. He had examined the laws of that State, since the adoption of the new Constitution, and found the laws plain and easy to understand. He had first been led to investigate this subject, some years since, by reading the life of the Hon. S. W. Downs, at present United States Senator from Louisiana, who was an able and warm advocate of reform in his State for many years, before the Convention of that State, in 1844, of which Convention he was a member. He had the whole banking interest of the State arrayed against him, yet over all opposition he triumphed.

In reply to the statement so repeatedly urged, that the members of the Legislature could not know all the laws of the State, and that the amendment would operate to prevent farmers and mechanics from going to the Legislature, he must say he saw no force in the argument. He denied that it would have that effect. He considered it an acknowledgment, on the part of the opponents to the amendment, that it would produce industry and watchfulness in the Legislature. It was right that legislators should well understand the subject on which they were engaged. It would place the labor of research and investigation upon the members of the Legislature, where it properly belonged.

The gentleman from Dorchester, (Mr. Hicks,) had stated that the members of the bar, knew how to charge. Perhaps they took lessons from the Registers. He, (Mr. S.,) vindicated the profession of the law; and referred to the history of the country, to show that lawyers had always took a prominent part in contests for liberty. They had contributed their means, time and talent, verily, their blood to its procurement. Lawyers might occasionally rail each other, but if others undertook it, they would find themselves in the condition of the man, who interfered with the quarrels of husband and wife, and thereby brought them both upon him. He expressed his great esteem and regard for the gentleman from Queen Anne's, (Mr. Spencer,) and the pleasure he always felt in co-operating with him, but, in this matter, he must differ with him. He thought from the tone and manner of the gentleman from Queen Anne's, that some startling disclosure was about to be made; some dreadful evil would come upon the State by the adoption of the amendment. He, (Mr. S.,) could see no danger.

The principle, so far as it had been adopted in Louisiana, had worked well.

Mr. MERRICK asked if the Constitution of Louisiana did not refer to the revival of laws?

Mr. STEWART replied, that in the Constitution of that State, the word *revived* was used; but, on turning to the debates of the Convention that adopted the Constitution, he found that the word *revived*, was, on motion of Mr. Lewis, stricken out of the article reported, and the word *revived* inserted, and he could not find where it was afterwards changed, so he inferred that the word *revived* in the Louisiana Constitution, ought to be *revived*. However that might be, he preferred the word *revived*. He could see no difficulty from the operation of his amendment. If gentlemen in the Legislature, were not able to prepare a law, it could be done in the committees. He thought that it would render the fountain pure, and then the stream would flow clear. The honorable gentleman from Frederick, (Mr. Thomas,) has so fully and ably advocated the amendment, and so forcibly portrayed the evils that it is to correct, that he, (Mr. S.,) would not longer detain the Convention.

Mr. THOMAS briefly replied to the remarks of the gentleman from Baltimore city, (Mr. Preastman,) and thanked him for adopting and endorsing his opinions. With reference to the effect of the amendment to repeal all pre-existing laws which might be omitted in codifying the laws, he expressed a willingness to give it that tendency. He was disposed to repeal all laws of a doubtful or occult character. Such, he believed, was the object of codification.

He asked if it was not the practice to repeal all previous laws on the same subject, whenever a new law was enacted? The gentleman from Baltimore city had said, that we could not simplify laws so as that every man who "runs may read." It was his desire that they should be too clear to be misapprehended.

After speaking of the profession of the law in terms of the highest eulogy, he stated that the cause of the multiplicity of suits was the doubt in the minds of lawyers themselves, of the true construction of laws, or because they had only read a portion of the laws relating to the subject. They may have been poring diligently over the laws, and after all, may have missed some supplementary act.

He briefly adverted to the remarks of the gentleman from Charles, (Mr. Merrick,) on the opinion he had expressed that, lawyers only should be employed in the task of codification. Suppose, said he, the gentleman and myself were appointed to revise the system of special pleading. He felt very certain that he would not be competent to the task, unaided by advice from any quarter, and as the gentleman from Charles had been some time out of the practice of the law, he also might feel some diffidence as to his own ability; and how could we expect that the most intelligent persons, not in the profession of the law, would be fit to undertake the task? We are not all like Minerva sprung from the head of Jupiter, ready for the conflict; or like Venus, in all her beauty, rising from the foam of the sea; but