

thought, however, that the great evil was not in the rules, but in a difficulty which the amendment of the gentleman from Kent, (Mr. CHAMBERS,) did not propose to remedy.

Mr. B. here referred to the habit of gentlemen to read the newspapers when the debates were going on, thus not listening to what might be said. [Several gentlemen rose and asserted their ability to read the newspapers and listen, at the same time, to everything that was said.]

Mr. BRENT continued. All he could say then, was, that gentlemen had a finer capacity than he possessed.

Mr. B. then referred to the case of the thirteenth section of the executive report, which had been reconsidered, and in which, after the reconsideration, on the motion of the gentleman from Kent, [Mr. Chambers,] the proposition had been restored just as it stood before. The result was, that the same mischief was left in the new Constitution which was found in the old one. He referred to the proposition which allowed the Governor to make temporary appointments during the recess where they were not cases of vacancy. There was the case of an original proposition passed for want of proper attention. It was reconsidered, and then restored as it stood before. Unless the Convention could enforce gentlemen to attend to what was going on—to keep the current of the debate and thus enable themselves to vote understandingly—no rule would prevent the consumption of time in motions to reconsider.

What was the proposition of the gentleman from Kent, [Mr. Chambers]? That the majority must govern. The rule was a very good one for the Convention, but would not do for the people. Gentlemen were not willing to apply it to the people. He would like to see gentlemen consistent—these Jeffersonian republicans, who were born in the doctrines of the Jeffersonian school—he would like to see them carry out these principles, as he, (Mr. B.,) did, among the people. Did Jefferson sanction the doctrine that the minority of the people were to govern? He would like to see the gentleman carry out the doctrines of that eminent man in all respects.

Mr. B. then examined the proposition of Mr. CHAMBERS—gave his, [Mr. B's.,] understanding of its effect, and argued that it ought not to be adopted. Members might from better information, from conscientious conviction of the error of their decision, change their minds, and desire to reconsider the decision they had made. They should not be deprived of the opportunity to do so.

Mr. CHAMBERS replied. His remarks will be published hereafter.

Mr. PRESTMAN said:

That he should not enter upon any of these nice distinctions which had been drawn on either side in the course of this debate. He did not know that it was important to the settlement of this question, whether the proposition had been sustained, or voted down in the Convention of Massachusetts, or whether the gentleman from Kent, (Mr. Chambers,) had adhered more close-

ly to the Jeffersonian track than the gentleman from Cecil, (Mr. McLane,) or the gentleman from Baltimore city, (Mr. Brent,) or whether, when the gentleman from Kent brought forward his amendment, (from the most honest motives as he, [Mr. P.,] did not doubt,) the almost unanimous sentiment of the Convention was in favor of its adoption. He did not know how the gentleman had arrived at that conclusion.

Mr. CHAMBERS, of Kent. By a general exclamation. I heard at least a dozen voices cry out in its favor.

Mr. PRESTMAN, continuing, said, that he was in the Convention at the time the notice was given, and no such exclamations had reached his ear. He had no doubt that the gentleman was sincere and honest in his course—that he believed that the existing rule had worked mischief, and that his amendment would work good.

He, [Mr P.,] desired to call the attention of the Convention to the plain, practical fact. There were now upon the journal, propositions which had passed by immense majorities, as to which motions of reconsideration had been intimated, and which, if not reconsidered, might, in the opinion of some gentlemen lead to a good deal of harm.

In this connection, Mr. P. cited the case of the single provision abolishing imprisonment for debt, where the naked principle had been adopted, without any of these controlling provisions which, in the judgment of some gentlemen, could alone obviate the ruinous effects which would result from its adoption. That proposition had passed by an affirmative vote of sixty-five—against a negative vote of some five or six. This was one prominent measure in respect to which a motion to reconsider was pending. That motion had been indicated by the gentleman from Kent, (Mr. Chambers.)

It was to be borne in mind that, although the gentleman from Kent had, no doubt, in his eye the future and not the past proceedings of the Convention, yet, as the gentleman from Cecil, (Mr. McLane,) had stated, the gentleman from Kent, (Mr. Chambers,) was not here arguing for the restoration of the rule as it originally stood. If the gentleman's proposition had sought merely to restore the rule which provided that no member should move a reconsideration, except he had voted with the majority, he, (Mr. P.,) could see some good reason for it.

But the gentleman proposed an entirely different thing. He had gone, in his, [Mr. P's.,] judgment one step too far, and had submitted a proposition, the effect of which, would be to delay, rather than facilitate the business of the Convention. He did not believe that the gentleman desired any such result.

He, [Mr. P.,] thought that a majority of the Convention might be willing to restore the old rule; but this was entirely a new proposition for which the gentleman had not been able to produce a single precedent in any legislative body.

He, [Mr. P.,] was one of those who were in favor of the application of the previous question. He hoped it would be freely used. It was at any time, in the power of the Convention to get rid,