

since the recess. It was thought that but little time would be occupied in its discussion. Matters more important remain to be acted upon; and if we are to occupy one, two, nay three weeks upon this report, the same delay in the consideration of other things will take place; and thus a month may elapse before we reach a question which was made the order of the day for yesterday. I mean the report from the committee on representation. I hope gentlemen may see the necessity of bringing this discussion to a close, but that some few hours may be allowed for the benefit of those gentlemen who have not yet been heard. After that, let us stop the general debate, and, five minutes being reserved for explanations, all the time that ought now to be given will be extended.

Mr. DORSEY regarded this subject as one of the gravest matters that could engage the consideration of the Convention, and thought that an undue advantage would be taken if gentlemen were not permitted to reply to the new facts and arguments which had been brought forward. If the Convention would exclude the views of members in this way, and hear only those of one side, he supposed he must submit.

Mr. BRENT, of Baltimore city. I have myself spoken two or three times on this report. I do not desire to speak again. It is no wish of mine to prevent gentlemen who have not spoken, from addressing the Convention; but only those who have already been heard. I am, therefore, in favor of the amendment of the gentleman from Charles.

The President explained that the Chair had ruled that amendment out of order, and stated the reasons for the decision.

Mr. BRENT. Well, sir, I can only say, I hope the Convention will put a stop to this debate. If it is to be prolonged until all the new views and arguments which may strike the minds of members, shall be delivered and answered, it is easy to see that final action on the report will be postponed for an indefinite period of time.

Mr. RIDGELY enquired of the President, what was the state of the question?

The President explained.

Mr. RIDGELY. It is necessary that something should be done to prevent the time of this body being occupied for an interminable period by some half dozen of its members, to the exclusion of all others. I am as ready and willing to listen to gentlemen as any other member of the Convention, but I protest against its time being monopolised by a few. We have a rule extending to every gentleman the right to express his sentiments, and that rule is constantly violated by members speaking three or four times.

Mr. BOWIE. Enforce your rule, then.

Mr. RIDGELY (apparently not hearing the interruption) proceeded to contest the sufficiency of the argument which had been urged, that gentlemen were not allowed to answer new views and positions, and to point out the everlasting delay which must take place in the business of the Convention, if this rule of action was to be adopted. The Convention should live up to its rule. He hoped the proposition would be

agreed to. If it affected any particular gentleman injuriously, that was his misfortune; the general result of the proposition would be wholesome and effective.

Mr. BLAKISTONE (who, under the invitation of the President, has presided over the deliberations of the committee, whilst the subject of the Elective Franchise has been under consideration,) rose, he said, for the purpose of putting himself right before the Convention, for he understood this to be an indictment against him.

The President (interposing.) The Chair would not entertain any indictment against the gentleman.

Mr. BLAKISTONE. I appreciate the courtesy of the Chair. I am aware that no idea of the kind was entertained, but I speak of the effect of the remarks that have been made by the gentleman from Baltimore county, (Mr. RIDGELY.)

Mr. RIDGELY. Certainly, I had no intention to reflect upon the gentleman.

Mr. BLAKISTONE. I am sure of that. I speak only of the effect of the gentleman's observations. Mr. B. proceeded to remark on the proper construction of the rule governing debate in Committee of the Whole, and to claim that his administration of the duties of the Chair had been marked by a strict adherence to its requirements; and if he had not discharged the duties of the Chair faithfully and impartially, then, he said, let the President of the Convention note the fault and substitute for me some gentleman who may be exempt from a similar fault.

Mr. BROWN. We will not let the President supply your place.

Mr. BLAKISTONE, in some further remarks, expressed his belief that all propositions of this kind did but protract the action of the Convention. Let full latitude of debate be allowed; let gentlemen be satisfied that they had discharged their duty to their constituents by a fair and frank expression of their will, and they would then be ready to vote. He desired, himself, to express his views, but was prohibited by the position which had been assigned to him. He hoped the proposition would not prevail.

Mr. DORSEY. Upon the question before the committee of filling the blank in the amendment with five days, I have never expressed my views nor spoken a word.

The question was then stated to be on the motion of Mr. WEBER to strike out from the resolution the words "first section," so as to make it applicable to the entire report of the Committee.

Mr. SPENCER hoped the amendment would not prevail for this reason, he said, among others, that he had indicated his intention to offer certain amendments which would lead to debate, and which had never been touched at all. He was unwilling to give to the judges of election the power to determine who are *non compis mentis*.

Mr. JENIFER. I think, perhaps, that this proposition may but embarrass the proceedings of the Convention, and I therefore withdraw it.

Mr. WEBER renewed the proposition, so as to terminate debate on the whole report.