

city of Baltimore, and to constitute the Senate of senatorial districts, of which the city of Baltimore shall be one, and to arrange the said districts in such a manner that they may be, as far as possible, equal in population—and to provide that each senatorial district should have five delegates."

Mr. CHAMBERS denied that this was an abstract question. It was eminently practical. He adverted to the common notion that this was the age of "progress," and said he believed in this country the progress in the arts and sciences, was much greater and much more useful, than progress in the science of government. In none of these was the improvement greater than in chemistry. It gave us tests by which in almost every case to ascertain the truth. If, for instance, the farmer desired to know whether carbonate of lime was an element in the composition of his bank, he had only to apply an acid to a portion of it, and its presence was truthfully announced by the "effervescence." There were some questions in law and logic, determinable by tests equally infallible. This was an instance. An "abstraction" is that which is by itself—it has no practical consequence or result. Now the resolution of the committee puts before the house the proposition, whether the basis of representation shall or shall not be exclusively that of a ratio of population. If you concur with the committee and say that such a basis will not be adopted, will there be no result—no consequence? If on the contrary you decide that the committee are wrong in repudiating this basis, and that it ought to be adopted, will this produce no result—no consequence? Why, sir, just so surely as you decide the one way or the other, will the committee report a corresponding system for you, and just so surely as members adhere to their opinions, will the system reported rest on that basis which this vote shall indicate, and shape be given accordingly to one of the most important articles in your Constitution. This is the "effervescence." The article in your Constitution—that's the "result."

He denied that the committee had in any degree offended against the letter or the spirit of the order requiring reports to be made without accompanying arguments. He explained the object of that order, which was not to prevent a report of opinions as had been said, but of arguments to sustain opinions. Every report must give an opinion. The fact that a particular provision is recommended for our adoption is the strongest form in which the opinion of its propriety can be expressed.

A report without an opinion would be that very abominable thing which is so hateful to gentlemen—an "abstraction." He vindicated the course of the committee. There was no argument here to sustain the report or prejudice the question. It was the opinion of the committee that this question should be decided as a guide to their action. There were so many and so diverse opinions amongst its members that a majority could not unite affirmatively on any plan. Some of the members would yield to no terms of com-

promise until the House should settle the broad question of "representation on the basis of numbers exclusively." No complaint can be made on that account. These gentlemen held themselves bound to stand upon this floor in public view in vindication of the claim of their constituents to the benefit of this principle. They thought the silence of the committee room was not the scene for their labors, as no history of their efforts would then appear. Of course the committee could not have the aid of these gentlemen in the preparation of any other plan till the House decided this question. It must be discussed. Gentlemen have said it shall not pass *sub silentio*—but must encounter opposition stern, and strong. It will occupy as little time now as ever. We are at it and why not get through it?

Mr. DAVIS moved that the Convention adjourn, but waived the motion to enable

Mr. McHENRY to give notice, that when the report of the committee on the elective franchise came up for consideration, he should offer sundry amendments, which he moved should be printed.

Determined in the affirmative.

Mr. DAVIS then withdrew his motion to adjourn.

Mr. DASHIELL renewed the motion to adjourn, and on the question being put, it was

Determined in the negative.

The question then recurred upon the order submitted by Mr. GWINN.

On motion,

The Convention adjourned until to-morrow morning 11 o'clock.

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FRIDAY, January 24, 1851.

The Convention met at 11 o'clock.

Prayer by the Rev. Mr. GRIFFITH.

The roll was called and a quorum was present.

The journal was read, and having been so amended, on motion of Mr. SPENCER, as to state the fact that he had withdrawn the instructions accompanying his motion to recommit the resolutions reported by Mr. MERRICK from the committee on representation, was approved.

Mr. PARKE presented the petition of seventeen officers and members of "Lippard Circle, Brotherhood of the Union, (H. F.) No. 3, of the State of Maryland, No. 86 of the Continent of America."

Also, of seventeen other citizens of Maryland, praying that a certain portion of real estate may be exempted in the new Constitution, from any forced sale, extent or levy, on execution or decree from or by any court of law or equity.

Mr. P. simply desired, he said, to remark that the signers of the petitions were very respectable persons—that the subject was one which was attracting universal attention, and which, he thought, deserved the respectful consideration of the Convention.

On motion of Mr. P. the petitions were referred to the committee on the bill of rights.

Mr. WELLS, from the committee on accounts,