

Mr. MILLER. I move to amend the amendment, by inserting "three-fifths," so as to read: "three-fifths of the members elected to this Convention," instead of a majority. I think there ought to be some restraint upon the power of the majority of the members to change the rules. The Convention has decided that two-thirds is too large a number; and I think that three-fifths might be very properly considered as giving a sufficient stability to the rules as adopted.

Mr. KENNARD. If the amendment should be adopted it would require 58 members to suspend the rules.

The amendment to the amendment was rejected.

The question recurred upon the amendment moved by Mr. JONES of Somerset.

Mr. BERRY of Baltimore county. Before deciding that question, I simply desire to suggest the very great importance of this matter. I understand the rule to be now that the rules may be suspended by a majority of the House. I am by no means satisfied that the political majority of this House will always be present. There may be a time when the political minority may be in the majority. It is to guard against any difficulty of that kind that I think it right and necessary—and I ask gentlemen here carefully to examine it—to require that a majority of the members elected to this Convention shall be required to suspend these rules.

The amendment was rejected—ayes 30; noes 36.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE moved to strike out the words "a majority," and to insert the words "three-fifths."

The amendment was adopted—ayes 37; noes 35.

Mr. JONES of Somerset. I would suggest that it is possible that this 43d rule that we have adopted this morning so emphatically may be suspended by a vote of three-fifths of a bare quorum. I would move to amend this rule by inserting after the words "The Rules," the words "except the 43d."

Mr. CLARKE. I suggest to the gentleman that a suspension of the rules is not a change of the rules at all. There is a regular order of business. The order of business can be changed, by suspending the rules, by a vote of three-fifths of the members present. But no rule can be changed without one day's notice thereof. In order to change Rule 43d, it would be necessary that notice should be given according to Rule 55. Suspension only refers to the order of business, and not to the direct change of a positive rule adopted by the Convention.

Mr. JONES of Somerset. That obviates the difficulty, and I withdraw the amendment.

Rule 53d having been read.

Mr. KENNARD said: I move to amend this rule by inserting after the words "engrossed for a third reading" the following: "If ob-

jection is made, then a majority of the members shall decide upon the question of engrossment; after the engrossment of a report is ordered, the Secretary shall have the same printed as engrossed."

When the question is put upon engrossing the report for a third reading, there might be objection, and it is not clear, and the House might be unable to determine what to do. The other portion of the amendment was suggested by my colleague (Mr. Stirling) who stated that when bills were ordered to be engrossed it had not been the custom actually to engross them or to have them printed with the amendments adopted upon the second reading. It is to meet this that I offer the second branch of the amendment.

Mr. BERRY of Baltimore county. I should like to understand what the chairman of the committee means by the word "engrossment." I know that it is the established parliamentary custom that when a bill is engrossed the Convention or legislative body has no control over it. It is the written law. I want this to be understood before we act upon it.

Mr. KENNARD. My colleague stated that when a bill had been ordered to be engrossed it had not been the custom for that bill to be brought before the body in a printed form with the emendations of the second reading. The object of my amendment was to meet that difficulty. I may not have framed it in the most satisfactory manner, but this was what I intended to provide for, that when ordered to be engrossed the reports should be re-written and printed.

The PRESIDENT. It was the impression of the Chair that when a bill was engrossed, it was placed on file and it was not in order further to amend it.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. The custom has grown out of the very loose way of doing things in the Legislature. The term "engrossed for a third reading" means that the bill shall be re-written, with all the amendments which have been adopted incorporated in the bill as a whole. After it has been so consolidated in one paper and engrossed, it comes before the House for a third reading in full as a whole; and then, if it is adopted, it passes into the files in the office of the Clerk of the Court of Appeals. But the custom here has been not to have it engrossed between the second and third reading, but to pass it, sometimes the next day, often the same day, and leave the engrossing clerk to prepare the engrossed copy after its final passage. The object of this amendment, as I understand it, is that this engrossment shall actually take place. If members desire it, for the purpose of distinctly understanding the matter before them, it may be printed before its third reading; and the vote upon its final passage is taken. I can see no objection to the amendment.