

zens, was extending itself into the counties of this State, and was not, as he had heretofore supposed it to be, confined to the city of Baltimore. His informant stating that again, again, and again, he had seen persons thus in the possession of naturalization papers, as they are called, standing at the polls of an election district of the county of his residence, awaiting the arrival of the new made citizens, who received their certificate of naturalization from the person who gave them at the same time a ticket to vote, which the person giving it, he saw deposited in the ballot-box. That the day before the last election in this State, a friend of the informant called upon him and showed him the naturalization papers of a foreigner, for which he had paid the clerk; and that in consideration thereof, this new born citizen was, by agreement, to meet him the next day at the polls, and vote the ticket that was to be given him, upon the receipt of his papers thus paid for. My informant then observed to his friend—"But how do you know that he will not cheat you in voting the ticket given him?" The reply was, "I am to see the ticket deposited in the ballot-box, and if he does not do so, he shall not have his papers at all."

This, he was credibly informed, and verily believes, was but an ordinary transaction, occurring on every election day at the polls of the different wards in the city of Baltimore. If this Convention under such circumstances will do nothing to put a check upon such abuses of the elective franchise, such foul corruptions of the ballot-box; then indeed there is no hope of the permanency of our free political institutions; which can only exist or be preserved whilst the purity of the ballot-box is protected against fraud and corruption. In all fairness he would state that the particular instance of misconduct in a county of this State, to which he had alluded, was the act of a whig, not of what in this body has been called progressive democracy, nor had he ever intimated a belief that the similar conduct, which he had described as prevailing in the city of Baltimore, was imputable to one of the political parties only. He had always regarded the odium as justly attributable to both parties. But as to what I shall say or do in this Convention, I disclaim all party ties or obligations; I belong to no party, my sole object being, in the matters now under consideration, to purge and protect the ballot-box from all impurities, and to frame such a Constitution as will give equal security and protection to every portion of the State of Maryland, and promote its tranquility and prosperity for ages yet to come.

He was free to confess that he was not so replete with the milk of human kindness and toleration, as the distinguished member from Queen Anne, who sees nothing in the acts of those patronizers of naturalization, which he had endeavored to portray; but instances of the purest and most praiseworthy charity and benevolence. Could he view their acts in the light that he does, he should be one of the last persons in the community to complain of them. To ask him to do so, was a heavier tax upon his credulity than it is able to bear. He had so long been in the habit of judging of the actions of men by the motives

which prompted them, that he wanted faith in that kind of charity and benevolence, which is barren of all fruits, is hermetically sealed up for eleven-twelfths of the years, and never discloses itself or is seen or heard of, but upon the eve of a warmly contested election. In the purity or sincerity of a benevolence so novel and extraordinary, he must confess that he reposed no confidence.

Mr. BUCHANAN said he had been under the impression that this very discursive debate had terminated on Saturday, and that he had regarded the able, patriotic, and liberal speech of the gentleman from Calvert, (Mr. SOLLERS) as entirely conclusive on the subject. It seemed, however, from the remarks which had been made this morning, that the debate was not yet to be brought to a close, and hence the necessity of a few observations from him (Mr. BUCHANAN).

His object was to say a few words to his friend from Kent (Mr. CHAMBERS). The proposition before the Convention was to engraft upon our political system a provision wholly unknown to it before—unjust—invidious—oppressive, and in derogation of the spirit of the age. Before any such provision, emanating from so distinguished a quarter, should be incorporated in our Constitution, the Convention was entitled to hear some satisfactory reasons for the change. He submitted whether his friend from Kent had not failed to make out such a case as ought to be satisfactory to the Convention—whether, in fact, he had not expected gentlemen who advocated a different system to give their reasons for the faith that was in *them*, rather than assign any sufficient reasons for his own. The gentleman presumed that frauds existed, and on the strength of that presumption, he boldly made the charge of their existence. Now, his friend well knew that no principle was better settled, than that where a charge of fraud was made, it was not to rest purely upon presumption, but the gentleman had given the Convention nothing more than the vaguest suspicion of its existence. If frauds did actually exist, and if the mode proposed by the gentleman from Kent would remedy the evil, he (Mr. B.) was quite willing that the gentleman should have his own way; but if fraud did not actually exist, then the whole basis of the complaint was taken away.

Upon what did the gentleman rest his charge of fraud? Why, upon the ground that, a short time before an election came on, when the excitement was great, when the judgments were lulled, or their cupidity awakened, frauds were not only more easily committed, but were in fact committed upon the ballot-box. The argument was not valid. Every man having any knowledge of the mode of conducting elections in the State of Maryland, (especially in that part of the State to which the mind of his friend from Kent was more particularly directed, that was to say, the City of Baltimore, where the greatest amount of the foreign population resided,) knew that the time antecedent to an election, when great excitement prevailed, and when corresponding care and vigilance were exercised, was precisely the