pathies for the victims of crime, we were prone to forget the great object of punishment. It was a fault in our nature, though a fault which "leans to virtue's side." Men exercising the high functions for which this Convention had assembled, should not yield to such impressions. The great object of punishment was its example upon society—its effect in purifying and elevating the moral tone of that society. All punishments should be so framed as to have the greatest effect upon that moral tone; to preserve it pure, if it could be so, and to punish with a heavy hand all those who would attempt to pollute it. Individual sympathies should not be listened to, when the public good required that punishments should be inflicted. Vengeance, it was true, did not belong to man—but in the spirit of justice, and not of vengeance, he would act. He referred to the many cases in which every appeal which human sympathy could make had addressed itself to the hearts of some of the best and purest men that had ever lived, and yet where justice had been sternly executed. And he instanced particularly the case of Major Andre. Mr. M. called upon the Convention to imitate the example of the Father of his Country in that case.

Here was a crime which struck at the vital principle of all republican governments; and although gentlemen of good hearts might feel reluctant to inflict exemplary punishment upon those who committed it, yet, if the public good required it, that punishment should not only be severe, but should be inexorably meted out.

He referred to the condition of public opinion as evidence of the light estimate in which this crime of fraud upon the ballot box had heretofore been held, and the necessity of infusing a new and more healthy tone into the public mind by proper and adequate provisions. Let the present and rising generation be taught that this was not the light and trivial offence which it had hitherto been deemed, but that it was in fact a great and heinous crime. The beneficial results of such a policy would soon be made apparent.

Mr. DORSEY said, he did not precisely understand what the amendment was, and he would be glad that it should be read.

The state of the question became the subject of some conversation between Messrs. MERRICK, PHELPS and TUCK; after which the amendment was again read.

Mr. CHAMBERS, of Kent, said, that he felt somewhat embarrassed by this proposition which had been offered in his absence. Undoubtedly the amendment of the gentleman from Kent, (Mr. RICAUD) was better than no provision at all. But he (Mr. C.) hoped that the Convention would not now falter in the disposition which it had hitherto manifested, to adopt the most stringent provisions against corrupt voting. He said the immediate, the avowed object—that which bore directly upon the question—had reference to corrupt proceedings at elections. On that point, he had supposed that there was no difficulty in the Convention.

He called the attention of gentlemen to the erroneous consequences which must result, if this mischief was permitted to increase and multiply, as the Convention had been told from various quarters it had increased and multiplied for some years past—and as it would continue to do if it was regarded with the least toleration. He believed that the most imminent peril to the continuation of our institutions was to be apprehended from this very source. He forbore to paint—he had not command of language to paint even the beginning of the terrible scenes which would follow, when the people should come to learn that those who had been elevated to the high places of the land, did not occupy them by the voice of legal votes. Whatever might be the reception, or the fate, of other portions of that Constitution which the Convention might present to the people, he had no doubt that any provision which might be placed in it for the purification of the ballot-box, would meet with a cordial and uniform response from one extremity of the State to the other. He should be gratified if his colleague, (Mr. RICAUD) would withdraw his amendment until a vote should have been taken on the question as it stood.

Some conversation followed

Mr. RICAUD remarked, that he was willing to take any plan which the Convention might suggest, if it would meet the point. And if that object could be accomplished by the withdrawal of his amendment, he would withdraw it.

But, after some conversation with Mr. MERRICK—

Mr. R. adhered to his amendment.

Mr. TUCK said, all must agree that something should be done to prevent the evils complained of. But in all penal laws there was a principle of this character, that you might make the punishment so great that no jury would enforce it. Such, he thought, was the nature of the proposition before the Committee. If the argument of the gentleman from Kent, (Mr. CHAMBERS,) had been made in favor of the punishment for the term of five years, it would have been a powerful one. The limitation of five years was sufficient for the purpose, and he was glad that the gentleman from Kent, [Mr. RICAUD] had persisted in his amendment. He [Mr. T.] should vote for it. If that was voted down, then he should vote for the proposition as it came from the Committee.

Mr. MERRICK argued that there was no fear that the laws would not be enforced by one or the other party—by that party against which the votes might be cast. The preservation of the purity of the elective franchise—the preservation of Government itself, required that we should hold up to public scorn, as a terror to others, all those who might be disposed to commit a similar crime.

Mr. TUCK suggested that this law was not to be enforced at the polls, but upon conviction in courts of justice. It was the sympathy of juries, to which he had referred. His idea was that if the punishment was made too severe, convictions could not be obtained.

Mr. CHAMBERS, of Kent, correcting a misapprehension into which he said, his friend from Prince George's [Mr. TUCK,] had fallen, in rela-