

into several elective districts, with a view to the choice of delegates to the Legislature. I was particularly anxious, in good faith, to have the whole subject referred to a committee, that that committee might take charge of the questions, who would have the advantage of a map, showing what sections of the State are contiguous. In that I had my colleague's co-operation. The committee could then take the whole subject up, and they would have a map showing what elective districts lie contiguous, and they would have the documents accompanying the map, showing the amount of population of the sub-divisions of Maryland. Then they could apportion among the elective districts the delegates they were entitled to, and among the wards of the city of Baltimore the number of delegates they were entitled to. I would again ask the House if it is in a condition to get at this thing, and dispose of it finally, and to say what shall be the boundaries of these districts?

Another question lies necessarily beyond all this. If you district Maryland into several separate sub-divisions, with a view to the choice of delegates to the Legislature, you must alter your law relating to the qualifications of voters. You must require those persons who undertake to vote for a delegate within a certain sub-division of the county, to have resided within that sub-division for a certain period of time. You must also provide new qualifications for a representative, and require the party seeking to be a delegate from any one of these sub-divisions, to have resided within its boundaries for a short period of time. These questions, and all other questions, if presented to a committee, could be deliberated upon by them, and they could bring in some definite and distinct proposition for the action of this body. I bow, though, with great respect to those who voted against me. I take the proposition before me, and shall still vote for it, because if it is incorporated into the Constitution, if the house adopt the principle, if the house will make these sub-divisions, they are then competent to appoint a committee to carry out its details.

I will take the broader proposition of my colleague, in preference to that offered by the gentleman from Kent. What is the object of these subdivisions? Is there not always a strife for the mastery, and should there not be a representation of minorities as well as majorities? Should not minorities throughout the whole State, speak as well as majorities? For the accomplishment of such purposes, the gentleman from Kent would have my most cordial co-operation. But why single out the city of Baltimore or any other portion of the State? What gentleman residing in one portion of the State desires to stifle the views of the minority, and never permit it to be heard in the counsels of Maryland? Would the county of Washington, having a delegation of five here, agree to divide Frederick county into these subdivisions, and thus prevent a consolidated vote there being cast, while the counties of Washington and Allegany would retain the privilege of a consolidated mass vote upon the floor of the House of Delegates hereafter? Could

the counties of Washington and Frederick agree to divide up the city of Baltimore to have her minorities represented, and leave to our people hereafter the privilege of stifling the vote of the minority within her bounds? Without intending to say any thing unkind, I would ask whether this would be a fair arrangement to the city? I look to future times, and not to present organizations. Our contests for a majority in the House of Delegates, have reference in a great degree, to political questions originating in the policy of the general government, to the great questions of commerce, to the improvement made in the currency, to internal improvements and other questions of national moment. Do we not want all the people to be heard upon these questions fairly, in all coming time? Would you divide one section so that the minority would speak, and permit its voice in other sections to be stifled and not heard at all? There is a great principle at the foundation of this, one that pervades all Maryland, and which every Marylander has a public interest in. It is a question which Frederick county should not decide according to her wish. It is a question about which the whole Convention should decide, as it relates to the political subdivisions of the entire State, not with a view to give parties an advantage but upon immutable principles of political justice.

I shall vote for this proposition of my colleague though I am very unwilling to see the subject brought in here in this unfinished condition. I have urged the materiality of this thing on the minds members. If a majority of this House had signified, at an early day, that they would not district Baltimore by itself, then, in my humble judgment, those of us who were disposed to district the whole State, would have accessions to our numbers until we would have constituted a majority of the whole Convention. I am anxious that the proposition of the gentleman from Kent, should be rejected, and that we should stand upon the broader platform and apply it to all Maryland.

Mr. CHAMBERS made some remarks which will be published hereafter.

Mr. JOHNSON. I will modify my amendment by adding to it the following proviso:

*Provided*, That each county and city shall be divided into separate election districts of compact, contiguous territory, in the manner hereafter to be provided in this Constitution, the qualified voters in each of which districts shall at the time and in the manner in which delegates are chosen, elect one delegate, who has for one year next before his election, been a resident of the district from which he shall be elected, and the residence in a district requisite to give a right of suffrage should be six months next preceding the election; but in case any voter, otherwise qualified shall have less than six months residence in the district of his then residence, he shall not thereby lose his right to vote in the district in which he may have resided for the six months next preceding his removal.