

tution was taken and read over, and there was no suggestion made, I think, by any member of the committee, to change the mode of election. They are elected now by general ticket; and so far as I am informed the present mode works well.

You have a certain number fixed by law; in some counties 4, in some 5, in some 6, 7, or 8. Now, if you elect by districts, it will either be necessary for the counties to be re-districted, assigning so many to each county, or that one should be taken from each election district. In some counties, having a large number of election districts, that would create a large board. In other counties the board would be too small. On consideration of the question, the matter being suggested, for one I think there are some objections to carrying it out.

Furthermore the county commissioners will have the whole power of taxation. They have the whole power to regulate the internal affairs of the county. I think the whole county are interested in voting who shall constitute the board. But if you let one little election district elect one member, and another another, you constitute a board of county commissioners something like the legislature. I am in favor of making the county a political incorporated body. It is so recognized under the law. And when the people are to elect this board of county commissioners, the people of the whole county, of every part of the county, should have a voice not merely in the election of one member of the board, but of the entire board. These are the reasons which confirmed me in the opinion that this provision should remain as reported by the committee.

Mr. PURNELL. The theory of the proposition of the gentleman from Baltimore county (Mr. Ridgely) could not be carried out in our county. There are ten election districts, and we have only five county commissioners. In the election of these commissioners they are not the selected favorites of the particular districts in which they reside, but they are chosen and elected by the different parts of the county so as to make the board represent every part of the county irrespective of the districts in which they reside.

I have thought it advisable in arranging the commissioners of the various counties, that the numbers and times of election should be so arranged that a part of the old board should always remain in. It is very apparent in a great many instances, when a new board is elected, all inexperienced men, many of them not knowing the duties devolved upon them, there will be difficulty in transacting their business. Hence it seems to me that by retaining two of the old board, it would aid very much in facilitating the deliberations of the board and the transaction of their business. They would have the benefit of the experience of those who had before served.

It is my own opinion therefore that two members of the old board should always remain upon the new board.

Mr. RIDGELY. I believe the suggestion made by the gentleman from Worcester (Mr. Purnell) is a very excellent one. I think some provision should be made by which a portion of this board should hold over; and that the whole board should not be elected at one time. But this detail would be much more properly referable to the general assembly. It would be impossible for us in the constitution to meet the exigencies or particular wishes which might prevail in the different counties. There might be circumstances which would exist in one county, and which would not exist in another county; and the idea of uniformity could not properly be kept up in the constitution.

I now move the amendment I indicated before, to strike out in the third line, the words "by general ticket and not by districts," and insert "in such manner as the legislature may prescribe," so that it shall read, "and shall be elected in such manner as the legislature may prescribe, by the voters of the several counties," &c.

Mr. SCOTT. I would suggest to the gentleman to insert after the words "in such manner" the words "and for such term," so that they can fix the term of office so as to have a rotation.

Mr. RIDGELY. I will accept that modification. The section will require further modification to conform to this amendment if it shall be adopted.

Mr. CLARK. Some counties may prefer to elect by general ticket, and others may prefer to elect by districts. There is nothing to make it uniform. If it was left to the legislature they might give the right to some counties to elect by districts; and in other counties it would be impracticable. That was the reason why the provision was made that the election should be by general ticket and not by districts, instead of by districts and not by general ticket.

INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS, &C.

The PRESIDENT announced that the hour had arrived for the consideration of the special order, being the report of the select committee upon the thirty-ninth section of the legislative article.

Mr. RIDGELY moved to postpone the consideration of the order of the day until one o'clock.

Mr. CLARKE. I am sure we will not be able to-day to get through the report of the committee on the appointment, tenure of office, &c. I think the thirty-ninth section of the legislative article is a very important subject. We have a full house this morning, and I hope we will consider it now. If we postpone it, we may not have as full a house for some days to come.