

our constitution. I would like to hear some explanation given for its introduction here.

Mr. SANDS. I should like to ask the committee the purpose of creating this office. It is one hitherto unknown to our form of State government.

Mr. SMITH, of Carroll. I move to strike out this section.

Mr. STIRLING. I do not wish to debate this proposition. But I concur very heartily in what this committee have done; and particularly as the chairman of the committee (Mr. Greene,) with whom I know this is a favorite idea, is not here, I desire to say a few words in its support. It does strike me that the suggestion on the part of the committee is a suggestion that ought to be adopted by this convention. I know it received very careful consideration from the majority of the committee that reported it; and it certainly has very grave reasons in its favor.

In the first place, while it is a new office in this State, it is an office which exists in a large majority of the States of this Union. It comes by virtue of analysis from the constitution of the United States. And it has this practical basis; that whereas, under our existing constitution, the succession, in case of the death or disability of the governor, is thrown upon the president of the senate, or the speaker of the house of delegates, who are two officers not elected by the people to those offices, in regard to whom the people have no direct agency, in regard to whose qualifications for governor the people have had no opportunity to exercise their judgment; this proposition of the committee enables the people, with their eyes open to what this man is elected for, to choose a lieutenant governor with the knowledge on their part that he is the next officer upon whom the executive functions will devolve in case of the death, resignation or disqualification of the governor. It gives an additional popular feature to the constitution by enabling the people to elect not only a governor, but also a man to be governor, in case the one elected for governor should go out of office in any way. And those States which have more and more adapted their constitutions to democratic principles are the very States that have provided for this officer in their constitutions; and for the reason that they are not willing to trust the devolution of the executive power upon an officer not elected by the people. And I would call the attention particularly of that portion of this house who believe in popular representation, to the fact that the senate of this State is the least popular branch of the general assembly. And it is not only the least popular branch, but it is based upon a representation which is less popular than the representation of any senate in any State in this Union, unless it is the State of South Carolina.

Now, by this provision of the committee, if the governor should become disqualified, or

the office of governor be vacated in any way, the functions of governor are devolved upon an officer chosen by the people, instead of upon the presiding officer of a body which is furthest removed from the people. It does still more. It is not a useless office. It puts an additional life between the life of the governor, and the vacancy of the office. Every body knows that in times like these there is very strong reason why the people should be enabled to elect a man to exercise the functions of that office. And it only involves an increased expense of about two hundred dollars a year. The salary of a lieutenant governor is to be the pay of a member of the legislature; that is, two hundred dollars a year, or four hundred dollars for two years. The sessions of the legislature are to be biennial, and the pay of a member of the legislature, is to be four hundred dollars for two years.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. It cannot exceed that.

Mr. STIRLING. It cannot exceed that; it may be less. The lieutenant governor will be entitled only to five dollars a day, for every day he may preside over the senate. As I was going on to say, it gives the people, in times like these, to have two chances as to whom they will select for governor; and not devolve the functions of that office upon the presiding officer of a body, a man who the people may not know is to be the president of that body. It may very well happen that the people of this State are not willing to trust the devolution of the executive power upon the president of the senate; and it still more may happen that they will not be willing to trust its devolution upon the speaker of the house of delegates. I have no disrespect for him personally; I am on very good terms with him. But I should be very sorry to see the speaker of the last house of delegates become the governor of this State. And yet when people's houses are burned down in our days over their heads, it may not be impossible that a bullet may go through the brains of the governor before the war is over. This question of life and death is a very practical one just now. And I believe this particular time is the very time to adopt this provision.

And it is an office which men of respectability would be willing to take, notwithstanding the smallness of the pay. It is an office of dignity and honor, and one which pays a compliment to the man who is selected for it. He occupies the dignified position of president of the State senate, with a chance to become the governor of the State, and it secures to the senate an able, dignified and impartial officer, and then to some slight extent it decreases the exceedingly restricted basis of the senate. Because the lieutenant governor, being chosen by the whole people of the State, and having the casting vote in all cases of a tie, that to a certain extent has some slight tendency to popularize that