

—“or is for any other reason not a legal voter in the manner and form provided,” &c.

Now I will go back to the article in the present constitution and see whether it does not exactly follow and tally with the provisions of the convention bill which have been quoted to night. It is in the second section of the article on the elective franchise :

“Sec. 2. No person who has at any time been in armed hostility to the United States, or the lawful authorities thereof, or who has been in any manner in the service of the so-called “Confederate States of America;” and no person who has voluntarily left this State and gone within the military lines of the so-called Confederate States or armies with the purpose of adhering to said States or armies” —

Is not that giving them aid and comfort of a very material sort ?

—“and no person who has given any aid, comfort, countenance or support to those engaged in armed hostility to the United States.”

That is the very language of the act that called us together.

—“or in any manner adhered to the enemies of the United States, either by contributing to the enemies of the United States, or unlawfully sending within the lines of such enemies money or goods, or letters, or information, or who has disloyally held communication with the enemies of the United States, or who has advised any person to enter the service of the said enemies, or aided any person so to enter, or who has by any open deed or word declared his adhesion to the cause of the enemies of the United States, or his desire for the triumph of said enemies over the arms of the United States, shall ever be entitled to vote at any election to be held in this State.”

Now I put it to gentlemen in common honor and honesty, and common sense too, whether the language of this act does not cover every provision of that section of the article on the elective franchise? No gentleman can seriously give a negative answer to this proposition. — As to the usual qualifications of voting, age, State and county residence, we know that these qualifications for voting were made for times of peace and not of civil war. Upon the theory of the gentleman from Anne Arundel, (Mr. Miller) see what might be the state of facts, I trust not the probable state of facts. Suppose that upon the day of election the State of Maryland were invaded by a confederate army. Large numbers of people from all these counties have gone into the confederate army. Suppose upon that day Maryland was invaded by a confederate army. I say that upon the theory of the gentleman from Anne Arundel, every man among them who was formerly a citizen of Maryland, might go unchallenged to the polls and deposit his ballot, though he had winged the leaden messenger of death to some Union sol-

dier's heart but the moment before. It would be a beautiful state of facts. It would be not even keeping up the law of Mr. Wigfall, who appealed from ballots to bullets; but it would be going back and using the very means from which he had appealed, and taking both ballot and bullet.

Now I can assure gentlemen that the loyal people of Maryland have made up their minds, that while they will in all things, while dealing with prisoners of war or others, follow the example of their government, he who wings the leaden bullet, or he who gives him aid and comfort, shall not deposit the ballot. The perils of the times are too imminent to allow of any half-way policy on this point. While I would go as far towards securing to every loyal man who has never given aid and comfort to the enemies of the government the right of voting, and would with him shoulder to shoulder battle for his rights, I will battle so long as God gives me life, by word and deed, against seeing the ballot box of Maryland polluted by the ballots of traitors.

As to the soldiers voting, that is not in this section, and I did not intend to say anything about it. I was not present here at the time of the discussions in the legislature upon that subject; but there are gentlemen here who were here then, and who took part in those discussions, and they will set the matter right. My friend overlooked the fact that the argument was that in its legislative capacity the legislature could not do this thing. My friend from Frederick, in the senate, voted against the soldiers voting, although he earnestly desired that they might vote; and what was the reason he assigned, and the reason that other gentlemen assigned? That they were here in a legislative capacity, and could not do it. — We are not here in any such capacity. We are here representing the sovereign people of Maryland, sent here to form their popular will into an organic law; and we mean to do it and abide the consequences.

Now in actual fact, as to the soldiers voting, who has a better right to vote than the soldier? I claim that he has as good a right to vote as any gentleman upon this floor. If he has not a right to vote as a soldier, I have not. In the bare letter of the law I have, but in its spirit I have not. He has taken his life in his hand and gone out to the battle-field to do or die if need be in the service of his country. He is a better man than I am; and I am proud to say so. If I can help him to vote, wherever he may be, on the weary march, in the camp, or on the field, God helping me, I will help him to do it; for he has a better right to vote than I have.

This is not so much a question whether the soldier shall have the right to vote or not, as how he shall vote. There is the pinch. A camp is a good school for political education. Your political meetings, your conventions, &c., where men make great harrangues, and