

voting in all the different wards? Why might not John Smith go and vote in every ward, and how could he be identified, unless he was a distinguished person who could not be overlooked, and in this way political questions of the greatest importance might be decided by these fraudulent voters. If it was true, as stated by the gentleman from Baltimore city, that an improper restriction is imposed on the citizens of Baltimore, we ought to remove it at once.

He was opposed to this double voting in the City of Baltimore, it was productive of great mischief to the whole State. And in the municipal elections, where one district may be in favor of one person, and the next in favor of another, voters from one district can turn the scale if residence in the ward be not required, the favorite candidate of the ward may be decidedly defeated by voters corruptly imported from some other ward, by moving into the other. The same may be said of Howard District, &c., where each elects its own Commissioners.

Mr. GWINN enquired how the action of the citizens of the City of Baltimore could effect the frauds perpetrated in the counties. It might be important in its effect on the elections for municipal officers, but it could not influence the election of delegates for the counties. If the voters of the City vote only once, how is the State injured, if the votes be given in this or that ward?

Judge DORSEY replied, that if the residue of the State had no interest in the city of Baltimore there would be some reason in this view of the subject. He had been accused with applying the term "rowdy" to the citizens of Baltimore when it was well known to the Convention that he only expressed his apprehension, that a spirit of rowdiness might be provoked by the interference of the citizens of one district with those of another. Ought not the State interfere when persons, who are called in the newspapers "rowdies," go from poll to poll committing outrageous acts, and preventing the free exercise of the elective franchise? He was anxious to keep the ballot box pure, by holding in check that spirit of demagogism which was destroying the character of the city. We must take care that there is no double voting, that the residents of one ward shall not go over and give their votes in another ward also. It is by this double voting that the wishes of the citizens of one ward may be overruled by the interference of another, and that a mayor and municipal authorities not agreeable to them, may be forced upon them. He desired to protect Baltimore against herself, to preserve her from being annihilated by fraudulent voting.

He concluded with an expression of his hope that the ballot box would be preserved in its purity, and that the practice of double voting would be prevented hereafter. If the principle of admitting all to the polls without any restriction as to residence is to prevail, our institutions will not be worth a brass farthing. Yet we are told we may do what we will with the rest of the

State, but we must not touch the city of Baltimore. He did not hold himself as a delegate merely for Howard District, but for all the State. And looking at the interest of the whole State, he thought a reasonable time ought to be fixed for residence, both in the districts through the State and in the wards of Baltimore city.

Mr. BRENT, of Baltimore city, was of opinion that a man who moved from one county to another, carried with him the right to vote. It was said there should be some restriction, and he would be willing to agree to thirty or sixty days in the county and twelve months in the State. But he was entirely opposed to any restriction in the suffrage of those who moved merely from one election district to another. As the law now stands one day's residence in a ward is deemed sufficient. He was satisfied with that; no man can vote in any ward who has not slept in it the previous night; and any one can challenge his vote on shewing where the person did sleep the last night. He desired no further restriction. The law prescribing a residence of one day cannot be evaded without either fraud or perjury, which can always be detected by the agency of a challenger. With reference to what had been said by the gentleman from Anne Arundel as to the danger of the voters of one county going over the line to vote in other counties, he contended that no evil could result from this practice, as they could only vote once, and if they voted in another county they could not return to vote in their own. It was desirable that there should be the fullest possible expression of the public sentiment. He was opposed to any restriction which would have the effect of preventing this. If the people themselves will perpetrate frauds, it is impossible to prevent them by any restrictions we may impose. Whether we fix a residence of thirty days or of six months, the restriction will be rendered of no effect so long as there is a spirit among the people which prompts to its evasion. He was, therefore, in favor of giving the largest privilege.

He concluded with stating that he did not understand his friend from Harford (Mr. McHENRY) as intending by his amendment to do any thing more than to limit the term of residence. In any remarks he had made, he desired it to be understood that he had no intention that they should be applied to that gentleman, who, he was entirely satisfied by his vote on Saturday, was in favor of the largest liberty. His remarks were only intended for those who voted in the minority on Saturday.

On motion of Mr. PHELPS,

The Committee then rose and reported progress; and

The Convention adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

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TUESDAY, January 14th, 1851.

The Convention, in pursuance of its order heretofore adopted, met at 10 o'clock.

Prayer by the Rev. Mr. GRAUFF.

The Roll of the members was called.