

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

Mr. THOMAS. I would prefer very much that my colleague would offer his proposition, as a substitute for that of the gentleman from Kent. He and I stand upon the same platform. We will district all Maryland, but will not single out Baltimore city, and the large counties.

Mr. JOHNSON. I am for districting Baltimore city and the entire State. I am not sure that I would not district the city of Baltimore, if the State is not districted.

Mr. SPENCER. As this question has been brought upon us unexpectedly, and as it is one which requires consideration, I move that this Convention do now adjourn.

The motion was disagreed to.

Mr. JOHNSON then offered his amendment, as modified by himself, as a substitute for the proposition of Mr. CHAMBERS.

The substitute was read as follows:

"And that each county in the State and the city of Baltimore, be divided into as many convenient election districts of contiguous territory, and as nearly equal in population as may be, as such county may be entitled to members of the House of Delegates, and each of said districts shall be entitled to elect one delegate, 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 of 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 shall 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 six months next preceding his removal."

Mr. HICKS. I desire to make a suggestion, and it is this: It seems to me now to be pretty clearly understood, that the Convention is prepared to vote, so far as districting the city of Baltimore is concerned. I, for one, am like my friend from Prince George's, (Mr. Tuck) I am also for districting any counties that may desire it. I am sure our people at home care very little about this.

Mr. HOWARD. This is not making a suggestion. I call the gentleman to order.

Mr. HICKS. What I intended to suggest was, that the city of Baltimore is already divided for municipal purposes, and no difficulty, therefore, can grow out of the action of the House if they determine to district that city. Gentlemen will see at once the predicament which we place ourselves in not referring the whole subject to a Committee. So far as the county from which I come is concerned, all the members of this Convention could not district or divide it so as to send three delegates from three separate subdi-

visions of the county. It will be necessary to submit the districting of the counties to the levy courts or county commissioners, and familiar as they may be with the counties, they will find great difficulty in the accomplishment of this task if it be assigned them; and yet they alone could, in his opinion, district the counties in any comparable justice to all.

Mr. JOHNSON. My purpose is to take a vote upon the broad proposition. I see the difficulties which the gentleman has suggested to me, but think they are very subordinate after it is once settled by this Convention, to district the entire State of contiguous territory, all of which is contained in my proposition.

After we have decided by a vote of this Convention, that we will district Baltimore city and the entire counties of this State, it becomes then a very easy and subordinate matter for a very few gentlemen to devise some plan, whether this duty shall devolve upon this Convention, or be referred to the next General Assembly, or whether, as suggested by the gentleman, it shall be left to the control of the levy courts of the several counties.

It becomes a secondary question, one by no means embarrassing, because it can be settled by a committee, by the legislature, or by the levy court, as a majority of the members of this body in their wisdom, may deem most judicious and wise. This is a principle which I am anxious to see engrafted upon the Constitution—it is a principle of bringing the representative home as near as possible to his constituency, and thus having every interest in every county properly represented, and every ward of the city of Baltimore, and in this manner all the various and multiform interests of the State should have a voice on the floor of the House of Delegates. It is that great principle which I contend for—that principle which I understand has been recognized but recently by the Convention in Ohio. They have adopted the very principle, as their rule of action, which I have been advocating. I wish to bring the House to a direct and positive vote. I move, therefore, my proposition as a substitute for the proposition of the gentleman from Kent, so that I can bring the House to a direct vote upon the entire subject.

Mr. HOWARD. I desire to make a suggestion, which is this:

If the gentleman moves his proposition as a substitute, he will not afford to myself, for one, (I do not speak for any other) the power of voting as I wish to vote. My suggestion is this. If the gentleman will move as an amendment to the proposition of the gentleman from Kent, then I will vote for it, although I hold myself at liberty to vote against the original proposition, as thus amended. I am against the district system altogether. If it is to prevail, I wish it extended over the whole State. Therefore, coming into its original shape as an amendment, those who think as I do, will vote for the amendment, and then the proposition will come in as an amendment, as the gentlemen from Frederick desires the vote to be taken.