

quent elections. That is the remedy we have provided in case the government is not administered in such a way as to be acceptable to the majority of the people—not rebellion, which has as its sole object the destruction and dissolution of the government.

I merely rise to say that I cannot see anywhere that any of the objections to this amendment have any pertinency in fact. Certainly I say that persons who cannot conscientiously take this oath ought not to expect, and ought not to be permitted to serve the State of Maryland. Unless they can honestly and conscientiously take the oath that they have not done anything to destroy the government, and will not do anything to destroy it, but the reverse, how can they expect that their services will be acceptable to the majority of the people?

This oath requires nothing more than usual, except that in previous constitutions no one has ever contemplated such a state of affairs as exists to-day. Finding ourselves in this state of affairs, now that we are about to form a new constitution for our State, I hold that we should be recreant to our faith if we did not try to throw around our government every guard that we can against the dangers which we see to threaten its existence. I presume it will be admitted that among the greatest traitors in the State have been found men filling offices in the State. We ought to declare in this constitution that no person shall be qualified for an office who would be a mere clog upon the government, and who would be unwilling to support it.

I am therefore in favor of the amendment as it stands. I have heard no reasonable objection to it, and can conceive of no reasonable argument that can be brought against it, taking our view of the case—which is certainly the correct view—that to the general government we owe paramount allegiance, and that in providing for its security and safety we are most effectually providing for our own security and our own safety.

Mr. DANIEL. I had designed to offer an amendment at the proper time; and although I do not know that I shall offer it, I will read it in explanation of the view which I take of this question. It retains nearly the same language, but is somewhat condensed, and with a little addition. The last clause of the amendment is this:

"That I will to the best of my abilities protect and defend the Union of the United States, and not allow the same to be broken up and dissolved, or the government thereof to be destroyed under any circumstances, if in my power to prevent it, and that I will at all times discountenance and oppose all political combinations having for their object such dissolution or destruction."

Instead of that, I propose that the amendment should read:

"That I will to the best of my abilities pro-

tect and defend the Union of these States, and will discountenance and oppose all political combinations and all efforts of every sort whatsoever, having for their object the dissolution or destruction of the same."

And I proposed also to omit the preceding words of the oath, "that I have been truly and loyally on the side of the United States against those in armed rebellion against the United States."

My object was that there might be a class of persons who at the beginning of this rebellion were not decided in their sympathies either way; and who had not done anything by act, word or deed; and if they take the former part of this oath and say so, they could not say that they had always been loyally on the side of the United States. And if such persons, though not able to say that, are still able to say that since seeing that the right side was the side of the United States, they have been on that side, and are willing to take this oath that henceforth they will by all means in their power discountenance any effort to break up the Union, I think that such citizens ought to be allowed to hold office.

There is another change in the amendment, in the omission of the words, "and not allow the same to be broken up and dissolved, or the government thereof to be destroyed under any circumstances, if in my power to prevent it." Believing that in a great revolution it is beyond the power of any man either to prevent it or to carry it on, I think it is useless to employ that term.

But I do not know that I should move my amendment now for the reason that there has been so much debate hinged upon that very point of being loyally on the side of the United States, this morning, and those words have been made the foundation of so much language of denunciation of the "usurpation of the general government," that I am now very much inclined to think it is better to let the words remain, and to exclude all who cannot say that they are loyally on the side of the United States and have been.

I do not wish to place myself or the majority of this house in a wrong attitude. Gentlemen who have spoken upon the other side to-day have endeavored to convey the impression that we were defending the administration, in endeavoring to set aside the constitution and the laws made in pursuance thereof. They have been *par excellence* the great constitutional defenders. I say that that places us in the exact position in which Jeff. Davis and his minions and those who sympathize with him ought to be placed. The majority are endeavoring here by such amendments as this to make men swear that they will defend the State of Maryland and the Union, that they have ever been truly loyal, and that they are on the side of the government of the United States.

Will any man in the minority in this house