

I have invariably sent men back to the wards they moved from in such cases.

Mr. STIRLING. Certainly; that is exactly what I say.

Mr. SANDS. I think it is important that the convention should understand this matter. If they will look at the old constitution they will see that it was intended to secure a vote to the citizen of the State wherever he might be. It was meant to secure to him the privilege of voting wherever he might be. If he had gone out of one county into another, and had not been in the new county the six months required to give him a residence there, he could go back to the county from which he moved and vote there, the counties being in the same congressional district. A gentleman from Baltimore county moves over into Howard county, in the same congressional district, and not having been in Howard county six months, he cannot vote there; but this article of the old constitution enabled him to go back and vote in Baltimore county for the congressman in the same congressional district with himself. The only difficulty that ever arose was from the ambiguity from the omission of this very word "not." The committee after full discussion of this matter put in this word as healing the ambiguity and making perfectly plain that which was not plain before.

Mr. STIRLING. It applies to the case of a man moving into a different district.

Mr. SANDS. No, sir; twenty-four hours gives a residence in the district. You may go from number one to number two, and vote in twenty-four hours.

Mr. STIRLING. In the city of Baltimore the wards are divisions into election districts; and it has been decided that in order to enable a man to vote for a constable or a magistrate even, he must have six months residence in the ward.

Mr. SANDS. Any amendment that may be required to meet the wants of Baltimore city, I shall be satisfied with.

Mr. STIRLING. The constitution expressly says that a man must reside six months in the district; and if in the election of constables and magistrates the divisions of the county are not districts, I do not know what are.

Mr. HEBB. In my opinion the phraseology of the old constitution is the correct one. The first part of the sentence is:

And in case any county or city shall be so divided as to form portions of different electoral districts for the election of congressmen, senator, delegate or other officer or officers, then to entitle a person to vote for such officer, he must have been a resident of that part of the county or city which shall form a part of the electoral district in which he offers to vote, for six months next preceding the election.

Then it stops there, with a semicolon, and proceeds:— "but a person who shall have ac-

quired a residence in such county or city, entitling him to vote at any such election, shall be entitled to vote in the election district from which he removed, until he shall have acquired a residence in the part of the county or city to which he has removed.

The first part of the paragraph refers to the dividing of a county so as to form portions of different electoral districts, one distinct subject matter; the latter portion of the paragraph refers to the election districts of a county. It provides that if a person shall have resided three months in one election district, and then removed to another election district in the same county and resided there three months, having resided six months in the county, and thus acquired a residence in such county, he shall be entitled to a vote in the election district from which he removed; and may vote there until he shall have resided full six months in the election district to which he has removed. That is the meaning of it; and I think the word "not" which the committee have inserted, destroys the sense.

Mr. STIRLING. I have always understood it that way, certainly. If a man has been six months in a county, it fixes his right to vote somewhere; and if he has acquired a residence in a county, and has moved into a different district in the same county, he must go back to vote to the place from which he came, until he acquires a residence in the election district to which he goes.

The PRESIDENT. I can only say that the interpretation in my county has been very different from that. A man living in one district moving into another, is there but a single day; he can vote in the old district within the rule. A man who goes from Caroline to Talbot, who has been in Talbot five months can go back to Caroline and vote, under the interpretation that has been given to this constitution. He cannot vote now in Talbot county, for he has not acquired a residence there; but he has not lost his residence in Caroline.

Mr. STIRLING. The constitution never meant anything of the sort. It never meant that a man should have the right to go back from one county to another.

The PRESIDENT. I always understood that to be the interpretation given to it by the last convention. I have understood that that was the unanimous opinion of the last convention; I will ask the gentleman from Baltimore county, who was a member of that convention.

Mr. RIDGELY. That has been the practice under that understanding in my county.

Mr. MAYNOR called for the previous question.

The PRESIDENT ruled the call not to be in order.

Mr. STIRLING. I shall certainly vote to strike out the word "not" if the amendment is offered.