

al; so that we have one gentleman in the Convention who holds that opinion.

Mr. BOWIE said his remark did not apply to a Registry Law uniform in its operations throughout the State.

Mr. MORGAN stated that his amendment granted to the Legislature the power to pass such laws as in their wisdom may be deemed necessary to ascertain the legal and qualified voters of the State and to protect the elective franchise from all frauds.

The question was then taken on the amendment of Mr. MORGAN, and the vote stood yeas 37—nays 17.

So the amendment was rejected.

The question recurred on the amendment of Mr. JENNIFER.

Mr. JENNIFER asked the yeas and nays.

The CHAIRMAN said the yeas and nays could not now be taken in committee.

The question was then taken and the vote stood yeas 25—nays 21.

So the amendment was rejected.

There being no other amendment to the first section, the second section was read as follows:

"Sec. 2. That if any person shall give any bribe, present or reward, or any promise or any security for the payment or delivery of any money or any other thing, to obtain or procure a vote for any candidate or person proposed or voted for, as elector of President and Vice President of the United States, or Representatives in Congress, or for any office of profit or trust now created or hereafter to be created by the Constitution or Laws of this State, the person giving and the person receiving the same, shall, on conviction in a court of law, in addition to the penalties now or hereafter to be imposed by law, be forever disqualified to hold any office of profit or trust, or to vote at any election thereafter."

Mr. SPENCER moved to amend said report by inserting after the word "give," in the first line, the following "by himself or by any other person, or by any means direct or "indirect."

Mr. SCHLEY offered, as a substitute for said motion, to insert after the word "give," in the first line, the words "directly or indirectly."

Mr. SPENCER thought these words would not answer the purpose. Those of his own amendment, he suggested, prevented all evasions or equivocations.

Mr. SCHLEY dissented from this view, and contended that the application of other words except those contemplated in his amendment, was a mere unnecessary accumulation of language. In forming an organic law, the words used should be as few and as pithy as could be used to express the object of the provision.

Some discussion, chiefly in the nature of verbal criticism, followed.

The substitute amendment of Mr. SCHLEY, by yeas 37—nays 10, was agreed to.

And the amendment as thus amended was agreed to.

Mr. MERRICK said, the Convention had provided for the positive evil of bribery; and he proposed now to provide for a negative mode just as

culpable as the other of accomplishing the same object. He offered the following amendment:

Insert in the third line of the second section, after the word "thing," the words "to induce any voter to refrain from casting his vote, or (forcibly) to prevent him in any way from voting or."

Mr. RANDALL suggested the introduction of the word "forcible"—to meet the evil of "cooping."

Mr. MERRICK accepted the modification.

Mr. BRENT, of Baltimore city, suggested that the words "with intent" should be inserted. It was the intent, he said, that should be punished.

And after some conversation, the question was taken, and the amendment as modified was agreed to.

Mr. SPENCER offered an amendment; to insert after the word "for," in the third line, the words "himself or for." Rejected.

Mr. BRENT, of Baltimore city, moved the following amendment:

Strike out in the last line the words "or to vote at any election thereafter."

Mr. BRENT, of the city of Baltimore, assigned as his reason for submitting this amendment, his unwillingness, by so severe a punishment as the original amendment prescribed, to shut out forever from so high a privilege, the person who may be guilty of the offence, and thus to render it impossible for reformation to restore him to his forfeited rights as a freeman. It inflicts disfranchisement forever, and cuts him off from every hope of being allowed again to exercise this valuable franchise. It makes him an unforgiveable offender. Believing such punishment to be too severe for the offence, he moved to strike out the words.

Mr. MERRICK expressed his opinion that any one who would prostitute this sacred right, ought forever afterwards to be deprived of it.

Mr. BRENT suggested the case of a young and inexperienced voter who had recently become possessed of the right, and, who in a moment of thoughtlessness, and under strong temptation, had been drawn for a moment from the path of rectitude. Would you inflict on him, perhaps a minor, a punishment so severe, that, when at a later period of life, he may have repented of the act, changed his course, and become a useful citizen, he shall find himself under the ban of this perpetual disfranchisement? However penitent, he must never again be permitted to vote. Now, he was not in favor of going to the whole extent of perpetual disfranchisement, because the offender had in early youth violated the law in this respect. He was perfectly willing that any punishment of a less severe character should be inflicted, but he thought that which was now proposed was altogether too severe.

Mr. MERRICK was of opinion that the very case cited by the gentleman from Baltimore would be one which ought to be marked out for an example to others. It would, he admitted, be hard on the individual himself, but it would on that account, have a more salutary efficacy in checking the growth of the crime.

Mr. RIDGELY moved a substitute for the pro-