

they were, he does not know; but they were ascribed to the Democrats. Frauds in procuring naturalization papers, are committed on both sides. Since the commencement of the Convention, he had been informed by a whig, that four Germans who had been in the country only four months, had been carried to Baltimore for the purpose, and afterwards voted the whig ticket in the county. This was a whig, and he urged the necessity of something being done to prevent it, because he said if it is done on one side, the other will resort to the same means in self-defence. If frauds have not been perpetrated in Baltimore, why did the Councils in 1838, pass an ordinance to punish fraudulent voting? Mr. T. read from the ordinance in proof of this statement. He made these statements to show that something should be done to prevent the evil. He was satisfied that there were frauds on both sides, as had been admitted frankly by the gentleman from Baltimore, (Mr. PRESSTMAN.)

Mr. T. agreed with the gentleman, that the only question was as to the efficiency of the amendment proposed. Upon this we differ. Mr. T. thought it would do much good in the counties as well as the cities. At seasons of election those best acquainted with the people were in the habit of canvassing the districts a day or two previous to the election, and ascertaining how the result would probably be. If the counties should elect their Commissioners and other officers by districts, this restriction of five days residence would prevent many fraudulent votes. If it were ascertained a day or two before the election, that either side would be in a small minority, they might import a few voters from another district able to spare them, and thus by a distribution of surplus voters from any one district, carry a majority in all the others. In most of the counties there are persons who vote where they happen to be at work, being residents of the counties, but having no fixed place of abode. In the hands of the designing, these men might be made to vote in any district, by being employed there the day before the election. And again, the judges of the elections, in some counties, hold the incorrect opinion that a man may vote where he has his washing done. If a man go to a district a day before the election and have washing done there, he might vote on the ground that this gave him residence.

Mr. PRESSTMAN. Are we to provide judges who understand their duties?

Mr. TUCK. No. But we should, if we can, save the people from the necessity of having these questions decided by them at all. Mr. T. said that the same would be the effect in Baltimore, in the city elections. It would prevent colonizing in the city and the counties; and if it did no good, as some thought, it was at least worth the trial, because no one had shown that any injury to any person was likely to result from its operation. He insisted that a partial remedy was better than to allow the evil to progress without any attempt to arrest it. He believed that the people generally would favor a restriction of this kind, even for a longer time, as tending to preserve

our free institutions, the permanency of which we all have so much at heart.

Mr. WEBER moved to amend the pending amendment by adding, at the end thereof, the following:

"Provided, That the voter, if required, shall make affidavit that he did not move into the election district, to effect the election then being held."

Mr. RIDGELY felt compelled, notwithstanding his previous determination not to mingle in this debate, to make some remarks, in reply to the gentleman from Prince George's, (Mr. Tuck.) That gentleman expressed surprise that there should be found any man who was unwilling to sustain the purification of the ballot-box. He desired to ask that gentleman, if he could suppose that there was any gentleman in this Convention, who would oppose its purification.— There was more of the time of this Convention lost in the discussion of what are either unnecessary or irrelevant questions, than of those which are relevant and necessary.

The object of every gentleman is the purification of the ballot-box. To effect this common object, some suppose that restrictions are necessary, others think they are not. He never could have supposed that the gentleman from Prince George, would have brought up here that extraordinary story, of the attempt of the Central Whig Committee, to buy over the Empire Club of New York. The gentleman ought to, as he hoped he would, have done the Whig Central Committee the justice to say he disbelieved the story.

Mr. TUCK explained, and said the Whig Central Committee had refused to entertain the thing.

Mr. RIDGELY resumed, denying that any such proposition had ever been made. No member of the Whig Central Committee ever dreamt of such a thing. He was sorry the gentleman from Prince George had brought forward this and other cases, which seemed to show that it was necessary to impose restrictions on the Whigs. He could not, after this, wonder if some Democrats voted for restrictions. He eschewed all party discussion. He came here with clean hands and a pure heart. He was unsophisticated enough to go before his constituents in Baltimore county, and ask them to elect him on the no party principle. He was so green as to believe that there might be found in a Convention selected by the people, to frame an organic law, men capable of rising above the evanescent operation of party feelings, and he had found his way into this body with that impression on his mind.

These matters are altogether irrelevant: they had nothing to do with the main question. That had been discussed and exhausted. The gentleman from Kent, (Mr. Chambers,) conceded, that the remedy had been so diluted by its reduction to five days residence, as to leave but little life in it; the gentleman from Cecil, (Mr. McLane,) had well qualified it as a homœopathic dose; and in reference to it he would ask, *cui bono?* The utmost that had been advanced in