

the pure voice of the people, was stifled by the corrupt practices of men, who had no legal right to vote.

Mr. JENIFER thought that there was some inconsistency in the argument of the gentleman who had just taken his seat, (Mr. MORGAN.) His objection was that the provision would operate unequally upon the State. Would not the same rule apply, according to the argument of the gentleman, to any law for the prevention or punishment of crime? And might not the gentleman, with equal propriety, say that no petty larcenies were ever committed in St. Mary's county; and, therefore, it was unjust and oppressive in the Legislature, to pass a law to punish petty larcenies in the State? So far as he, (Mr. J.) could perceive, the amendment of the gentleman would do away with any benefit that might be expected to result from the passage of the law. He wanted to have such an enactment, not for a part of the State, but for the whole of it—Charles county, Baltimore city, and every other section of the State. Any thing less than that, would fall far short of his views and wishes.

Mr. MORGAN denied the applicability of the illustration given by the gentleman from Charles, (Mr. JENIFER,) to the point under consideration. Under the proposition of that gentleman, if frauds existed in Charles county, and no where else, the Legislature could not pass a law to remedy the evil in Charles county without making it applicable to the State even though frauds did not exist, thus making no discrimination between the innocent and the guilty.

Mr. J. U. DENNIS said, he did not expect that any thing he could say would influence the opinion of any member. Still as he was in favor of any proposition which had for its aim, the prevention of these frauds, he should say a few words upon the various propositions before the Committee. He could not assent to the proposition of the gentleman from St. Mary's, (Mr. MORGAN.) He (Mr. D.) was in favor of every measure not absolutely onerous in itself which would tend to the purification of the ballot-box. The Committee had heard from other gentlemen how frauds were committed in other counties; but some of them knew nothing of frauds in their own. To hear the gentleman from St. Mary's (Mr. MORGAN) and the gentleman from Baltimore county, (Mr. BUCHANAN) speak of their counties, one would suppose that they inhabited

"A land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign."

For his own part, he believed that in every section of the State, more or less, these frauds prevailed. It was in the nature of the Government and in the nature of the human character, that it should be so.

What was the corrective? As one means he was in favor of the amendment, of the gentleman from Charles, (Mr. JENIFER.) He (Mr. D.) had voted, and should continue to vote for every measure which held out a reasonable hope of effecting the object in view. He believed that a Registry Law, coupled with the amendment of the gentleman from Kent, would cut up this sys-

tem of bribery and corruption, root and branch. He feared, however, that no such proposition would receive the vote of the Convention. Measure after measure had been met by solid phalanx arrayed against it, and on Saturday last the gentleman from Caroline, (Mr. STEWART) had called for "concert of action." He (Mr. D.) had no doubt that the requisite numbers would come with the clansman at the sound of Roderic Dhu's whistle, and vote against this thing.

Mr. McHENRY. (Interposing.) The gentleman from Caroline, (Mr. STEWART) is not new in his seat. But the gentleman over the way, (Mr. DENNIS,) has misconceived the remark. The gentleman from Caroline called for concert of action on the part of reformers.

Mr. DENNIS. Who are they—may I ask the gentleman who represents the gentleman from Caroline?

Mr. McHENRY. Some very good reformers are among the Whigs.

Mr. DENNIS. I shall present myself as a reformer at your call—though I am apprehensive that my claim will be rejected.

Mr. D. concluded by briefly contesting the argument of Mr. MORGAN as to the unjust operation of the amendment of Mr. JENIFER, and argued that there would be much injustice in the amendment of the gentlemen from St. Mary's, (Mr. MORGAN.)

Mr. MORGAN said, that the gentleman who had just taken his seat (Mr. DENNIS) had misconceived his amendment. He (Mr. M.) had offered no amendment, making special reference to counties—or giving power to the Legislature to make local laws. His amendment gave to the Legislature the constitutional power to discriminate between the application of laws to particular sections and a uniform system. If the Legislature, knowing the wants of the people and informed of the existence of frauds, deemed it necessary to pass a uniform Registry Law, they were to do so. The power was full and ample to pass, or not to pass it, as the case might require. He would be the last man to introduce partial provisions, because he thought that the operation of laws should be uniform. If frauds existed, the Legislature would act; if such frauds were not made to appear, they would not act. The matter should be left with the Legislature, who were the Representatives of the people, and responsible to them.

Mr. PHELPS thought the proposition before the committee was so uniform and fair that no gentleman could vote against it. Every gentleman who believed that frauds did exist at the ballot box, and that the evils were such as to require a corrective, could not fail to give it his sanction. It merely gave the Legislature the right to pass such laws as in its wisdom they might think necessary and proper to correct existing evils now or in the future.

Was not every gentleman satisfied that such frauds did exist in certain sections of the State, and that they would increase unless this Convention should adopt some effective means for their detection and suppression? It seemed to him that on a proposition so little liable to the charge