

on elective franchise, has been made the ground-work upon which has been based another provision contained in this report of the committee on the schedule, and which is more objectionable than the oath which was incorporated in the article on the elective franchise. That was but the beginning of the end.

Now, so far as I am concerned, I am free to confess here that I did not enter this convention with any political prejudices. I did not come into this convention for any other purpose than to make such an organic law as would be acceptable to the people at large. It was the remark of a heathen philosopher, and it is applicable to the present day, "*Scientium*." I know that of all the problems presented to the human mind, that is the most difficult of solution. The scriptures tell us that "the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." So far as regards my own individual feelings and wishes, I came here under the impression I have always entertained in regard to these political exacerbations, political excitement, political vituperation and political prosecution. And were I to-day in the same position with the honorable gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Stirling,) in this convention, I assure you that I would be guilty of no act which would be calculated to oppress my fellow citizens.

In all governments, from the very foundation of society to the present period, changes and mutations have taken place. And there never has existed a government even anterior to the light of revelation, but what it was the duty of the ruler as well as of the citizen to adhere to the principles of that government. And whenever there has been a departure from the established laws of the land, from the established organization of any government, you will find that it has always sooner or later eventuated in revolution. If we take for instance the history of Rome. It was founded by Romulus. It was a legal government, and under five successive reigns it flourished and advanced in power and conquest, and everything connected with the peculiar organization of that government. But upon the accession of Tarquin, when contrary to every principle of justice and every principle of morals, there was an outrage offered to a Roman matron, in the conduct of Sextus towards Lucretia, what was the consequence? It eventuated in the downfall of Rome, and the expulsion of the Tarquin family from the kingdom. It was an immaterial point, it is true, in the history of Rome, as compared with the peculiar organization under which it has succeeded and flourished. But when we take into consideration that it was an outrage to an individual, to a female, we will recollect that Brutus took the dagger all reeking with blood, and swore that it should never be re-

turned to its scabbard until the liberties of Rome were achieved. And then it followed that the kingly government of Rome was abolished. And so it will be with any free government.

Here we have lived under a government of equal laws, and equal justice, and equal rights. Here we have been taught to believe that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, and that public men and public measures were the legitimate subjects of criticism. Does it follow, of course, because we do not believe in the policy of this government, because we do not believe that that policy is calculated to advance the interest and prosperity of the country in which we live—does it follow that we are rebels? Does it follow, as a necessary consequence, because we do not sustain the government in all its acts, do not sustain this convention in all its outrages, that we must necessarily be rebellious? Does it follow that because we believe you have done us injustice, that you have deprived us of that which did not belong to you, but which was ours by all the guarantees of the laws and the constitution of the country; because we cannot sustain you in all these acts of outrage, does it follow that you are to pass test oaths here, by which you are to perpetuate your power; representing as you do but one-third of the population of this State; perpetuating your power by putting oaths to us which are offensive, which are contrary to the constitution and laws of the land, and which are contrary to the very principle of the very law under which this convention is assembled.

Why do you propose to embody this test oath in your constitution, and to make it a part of your constitution? Why do you require the citizens of Maryland to take that oath before the constitution has been submitted to the people for their ratification or rejection? What does the constitution of the State of Maryland, under which we are living, say in regard to this oath? It says that we shall true allegiance bear to the State of Maryland, and support the constitution and laws of the United States. What was the oath embodied in the article on the elective franchise? That you shall bear true allegiance to the State of Maryland, and that you shall support the laws and constitution of the United States. Was not that enough? Was it necessary that the law should be retrospective, that it should look back? What says Mr. Lincoln's amnesty proclamation? And yet under this provision, if any man comes back to Maryland who has been in the Southern army and takes the oath of allegiance to this government he is not entitled to vote. If any gentleman in the city of Baltimore was found on the 19th of April, 1861, under the excitement of the moment, with a musket upon his shoulder for the purpose of driving back, as he believed, the invaders of the soil of Maryland, can he con-