

the system of taxation, rendered necessary by the indebtedness of the State, have extricated the public credit from its imminent peril. We can now, at least, calmly and deliberately survey our condition, unembarrassed by the fear of general insolvency, and without the apprehension that a change contemplated in the organization of our government, will disturb the general confidence in our solvency and honor.

They know that the opponents of a convention have frequently urged that the advocates of reform were unwilling to submit a particular account of the defects existing in the present system; and have from thence drawn the argument that popular favor was more aimed at in the movement, than any substantial benefit to the State. The undersigned think that this reproach is to the last degree unjust. If they belonged to a committee on the Constitution, organized for the single purpose of considering the various defects, which are alleged to exist in that instrument, it might be well urged that they ought to express in detail their opinions on the several reforms commended to their notice. But it should be remembered that they are not a body constituted for the purpose of taking into consideration particular reforms. The very end which they desire to accomplish by the assembling of a convention is a free and unembarrassed inquiry into our existing institutions. If there were only a few certain and manifest defects, upon which the public were well agreed, they frankly admit that the assembling of a convention would be an unnecessary measure. The occasion for a step, which passes beyond the common bounds of legislation, arises from the number, variety and conflicting character of the changes which are demanded. If these, or the larger number of them, were trivial in their nature, the undersigned would shrink from the responsibility of invoking a solemn convention to decide upon their merits. But, it is well known, that public opinion is divided upon those portions of our present Constitution, which underlie and sustain the whole fabric.

The undersigned would respectfully insist, that a concurrence of opinion with regard to particular reforms, is not to be looked for or expected. A constitution may exhibit material defects to the experience of one man, which are matters of mere speculation to another. Neighborhoods, whose necessities require a large number of officers appointed by the Executive, feel a choice, which is in derogation of their interest, to be a serious calamity: while localities, which do not call for the employment of such agents, are insensible to the inconveniences which such appointments occasion, and careless as to the remedy. The same remark might be applied to every species of State machinery. The situation of no two districts is so identical, that the same law bears equally upon both. What is a galling burden to one, is an inconsiderable evil to another.

When the constitution was formed, it was, in the opinion of the undersigned, as just and equitable an instrument, as the experience of that time, enabled honest and patriotic men, to