

important and difficult, as well as the most delicate work in the construction of a republican Constitution. Upon the wisdom and prudence of our action depend the prosperity and happiness of Maryland now, and, it may be, for ages to come. It behooves us, therefore, to approach the consideration of questions so grave and important, with calmness and deliberation, deeply impressed with the magnitude of the trust committed to our charge, and influenced only by an honest and patriotic determination of performing well and rightlily the work we are called on to do.

Mr. President, very many schemes for the distribution of political power among the people of the various sections of the commonwealth, have been presented, each worthy of consideration; but, I do not propose to occupy the attention of the Convention with the examination of but one of these schemes. Under existing circumstances, I deem the scheme referred to the most important. It is favored by a large portion of this body. It has received a larger affirmative vote than any other proposition. My friend, who sits behind me, (Mr Shower,) has given notice that he will move to reconsider the vote by which it was rejected; and its advocates boast of their intention and ability to carry it. A measure so important in itself, and presented under circumstances so imposing, demand from us the fullest consideration. We are called on, carefully to examine its tendencies and weigh its effect on the interests of those we severally represent.

It is scarcely necessary that I should inform the Convention that I refer to the proposition of the gentleman from Washington county, (Mr. Fiery,) which I will read for the information of the Convention. It is as follows:

Mr. FIERY moved to amend the report submitted by Mr. MERRICK, as chairman of the committee on representation, by striking out all after the words "the House of Delegates," in the second section, first line, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"Shall be composed of seventy-three members, to be apportioned among the several counties and city of Baltimore, according to the ratio herein provided, and to their several numbers, (as shown by the last census of the United States,) which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, three-fifths of the slaves, and allowing to each county one additional delegate for a fraction exceeding three-fourths of the ratio, but each county shall be entitled to at least two delegates. The ratio shall be one delegate to every six thousand of said population in said counties and city, until the number of the House of Delegates shall be sixty-nine, and thereafter the ratio shall be one to every thirty-two thousand.

Counties.	Population.	No. of Delegates.
Allegany, . . .	22,584	4
Anne Arundel, . .	20,871	3
Baltimore county, .	40,082	6
Carroll, . . .	20,220	3
Caroline, . . .	9,370	2
Calvert, . . .	7,824	2
Cecil, . . .	18,601	3
Charles, . . .	12,329	2
Dorchester, . . .	17,162	3
Frederick, . . .	37,419	6
Hariord, . . .	18,498	3
Kent, . . .	10,608	2
Montgomery, . . .	13,815	2
Prince George's, . .	16,946	3
Queen Anne's, . . .	12,776	2
St. Mary's, . . .	11,359	2
Somerset, . . .	20,224	3
Talbot, . . .	12,158	2
Washington, . . .	30,108	5
Worcester, . . .	17,490	3
Baltimore City, . . .	167,830	10
Howard, . . .	12,000	2
Total,		73

The first idea which is suggested by this proposition is, that the rule laid down, is deduced from the distribution, not the distribution from the rule. It is evidently designed to favor a particular region. Its authors have arbitrarily determined how many, in their judgment, their favorite section ought to have; and then they have made a rule to fit their own allotment; and they have done it, too, with some skill. They perfectly understand the value of fractions, and have assumed a device which occasions the least possible loss to their own region.

In Washington county there is a fraction of only one hundred and eight lost, while in Anne Arundel there is a fraction of two thousand eight hundred and seventy-one, and in Somerset a fraction of two thousand two hundred and twenty-four thrown away. By this rule, seven counties, with thirty members, lose fractions to the amount of only three thousand four hundred and thirty-six, while the remaining or eastern counties, with but thirty-three members, lose six thousand three hundred and fifty-eight in fractions.

Allegany, with a fraction of little more than three quarters of a ratio, gets an additional member, while Somerset and Anne Arundel with fractions in each, equal very nearly to half a ratio, get nothing for them. Baltimore city with ten members, loses for fractions but three thousand eight hundred and thirty, while Somerset and Anne Arundel, together with but six members, upwards of five thousand for fractions.

This rule also gives to the seven western counties, including Cecil and the city of Baltimore,