

that time, wielded by the deputies of proprietaries or companies in England.

In consequence of this it was, in the first place, omitted by many States, which since in altering their constitutions, have adopted it, gathering wisdom from the experience of their sister communities, of whose fundamental law it originally formed a part. I have a list of the States in which the power at present exists in one form or another. I find that in the twelve States of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Louisiana, Mississippi, Michigan, Texas, Iowa, Wisconsin and Georgia the veto power is lodged in the hands of the Governor, subject to be overruled by two-thirds of both houses of the Legislature. In ten other States, viz: Vermont, Connecticut, New Jersey, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Alabama, Missouri, Florida and Arkansas the Governor possesses the suspensory veto, requiring the concurrence of a majority of all the members elected to each branch of the Legislature to override it. Of the remaining eight States, (excluding California, the provision of whose constitution, in this respect, I am not apprised of,) four, until a very recent period, confided the election of their Governors to the Legislatures—and of course, for the reasons already given, it would have been inconsistent with all sound principles of government, had these clothed their executives, so chosen, with the veto power. So that, in this Union, there are but four States where the Governor was not, till a late period, dependant on the Legislature, in which this suspensive check is not vested in him. I by no means assert, sir, that we ought blindly to imitate the institutions of our confederates, but only wish to show, by these precedents what American Statesmen have, with such few exceptions, considered an indispensable element of an executive power constituted as we have already determined to form ours. We profess the same doctrines, we advocate the same theories of government! Should not our deductions be similar and lead to like results?

But, sir, besides those considerations, applicable alike to this and the other States of this Union, it does seem to me that there are additional reasons, peculiar to Maryland, why we should vest in our Chief Magistrate this conservative check.

In no one of the other States, so far as my observation has extended, does there exist so deep seated a sectional jealousy, leading to conflicts for power, and strife for local aggrandisement, as that which has long prevailed here, and the extirpation of which will require all the appliances which foresight and patriotism can devise. Whence has arisen this deplorable state of things, and what are the appropriate remedies?

In almost every other State—I may say, that virtually in every other State of this Union—the principle of requiring not less than a majority of the electors to sanction, through their representatives, all laws, has been practically adopted. It may be, that in some of the States, the apportionment of representatives is more or less arbitrary, or has become unequal in the lapse of time, through the changes of relative population. But in none other does the disproportion between po-

pulation and representatives at all approach that which exists here. And where the departure from the principle is furthest except in Maryland, either through difference in the mode of electing the two branches of the Legislature, or by the investment in the Governor of the limited negative, it has been rendered almost inevitable that every law should have received the approbation of the representatives of the larger portion of the people. If there are any States, beside our own, in which this is not the case, Virginia and South Carolina are those. Discontent prevails in both, not probably to the same extent as here, because the departure from the principle is not so wide. In Virginia, however, the popular feeling on the subject has been sufficient to give birth to a Convention like ours, and in that Convention this subject, like Aaron's rod, has swallowed up the rest. In South Carolina the upheavings of public discontent are already very palpable, and a Constitutional Convention there is pretty certain to ensue, so soon as the external relations of that bellicose commonwealth permit her to turn her attention to her internal concerns.

In Maryland alone, there has been a determined and successful (I will not say unjustifiable,) resistance to every attempt to engraft upon its Constitution any principle as the basis of representation. It is certain that very few of us come here, whatever may have been our abstract doctrines on this subject, with the slightest expectation that any such principle would be admitted into the new Constitution. Most of us, indeed, were hampered by positive or implied pledges to our constituents, which did not allow us to follow the dictates of our own sense of right, or to yield to convictions which interchange of views may have produced. Under these circumstances, a compromise was inevitable, and it has taken place. We have adopted a basis of representation by which the inequality formerly existing, is much diminished, although the basis itself is, in part, entirely arbitrary, and not such as will render the concurrence of the representatives of near a majority of the people, necessary to the enactment of laws. This cause of discontent, though much diminished in force, still remains. The popular majority will still feel that they are under the control, and subject to the oppression of the minority.

That feeling will grow and gather strength in the nature of things, and finally bear down all opposition, unless that popular majority is armed with some defence on which it can rely as a safeguard against the abuse of its rule by the minority. In this way it has become the interest of both sections, as well of the small counties as of the large counties and the city of Baltimore, to engraft the feature which I am advocating, on the Constitution. It will protect the latter against all overt action, all oppressive legislation on the part of the minority; while it will save the small counties from the probability of the loss of that disproportionate representation which they still retain and consider essential to their security—perhaps by a revolutionary movement, peaceable, but possibly attended by the violence which has