You may break, you may shatter the vase, if you
will,
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still!

Remarks of Mr. Bowie, Friday, May 2nd, 1851.

Mr. Bowie said he regretted he felt himself
compelled to say something on this proposition,
because the vote he intended to give to-day, would
come in direct conflict with the vote he gave
yesterday on the proposition submitted by the
gentleman from Frederick, (Mr. Johnson,) look-
ing to a general division of the election districts
in the State. He had never felt any doubt either
in regard to the propriety, or as to the duty which
this Convention owed to a very large minority in
the commercial city of Baltimore, numbering, as
his friend from Kent (Mr. Chambers,) said, about
80,000. In his opinion, some provision ought to
be made in the Constitution, by which so large a
proportion of citizens of Maryland should be re-
presented in the Legislature of the State. And
it was, because, like the gentleman from Fred-
erick, he was opposed to the influence which
large masses could bring to bear upon any por-
tion of this government, that he had favored the
districting of Baltimore city. But, when you go
beyond certain limits, when you undertake to di-
vide the counties, small as they are, into districts,
and permit little knots of 3 or 400 voters to be
represented in the House of Delegates as muni-
cipal districts, you are carrying out the principle
to too great an extent. The only reason why it
was proper to sub-divide Baltimore city, as was
well stated by the gentleman from Kent, was,
because the minority there, was so numerous as
to amount to 80,000.

But, as to the idea of little minorities, scatter-
ed throughout the State—say of 2, 3 or 400—
being represented, was a proposition he never
would, nor could sanction. He saw no propriety
in it, because by those combinations of minori-
ties, you produced a result, in fact, by which
minorities would exercise all power: which
was a monstrous proposition. But, he had
voted yesterday for the proposition of his friend
from Frederick, (Mr. Johnson.) He had not
given to it much reflection. He had not looked
at it carefully, or run it out in all its conse-
quences, but upon more mature consideration, he
saw in that proposition nothing more or less than
a foundation, laid deep and immovable, of a
general representation of the State, based upon
population hereafter, including the city of Balti-
more.

He would ask, if we did not understand that
the House of Delegates was to be composed, and
is composed of delegates from the various coun-
ties of the State, as such? Were we to be told
that in all time to come, our county limits were
to be obliterated? Our county individuality de-
stroyed? That we were no longer to send dele-
gates to the House of Delegates, from the differ-
ent counties of the State, as such; but that our
county municipality, or as some gentlemen had
thought proper to call it our county sovereignty,
was to be forever gone? That they were to have
districts laid off in the counties, and that repre-

sentatives were to be sent immediately from the
districts, and not from the counties?

Now, the moment we sought to obliterate and
annihilate this idea of county independence, then
the State would be laid off—including Baltimore
city, into a number of districts, and they would
be represented here as districts, and districts
only.

How long did they suppose, if this system
should prevail, would the representatives of
counties be able to maintain themselves on the
ground they had planted themselves, of territorial
representation?

The Convention of 1776 met upon a common
platform, and they had solemnly agreed to stand
on that platform. If you are determined to des-
troy our county individuality, he asked gentle-
men, as sensible men—he asked those who repre-
sented the counties of the State what argument
would they be enabled to use with a member who
came from Baltimore, for the purpose of carrying
out the principle of representation according to
population? Why, he would ask, should a dis-
trict in Kent county, which had but 400 voters,
send one representative here, when one ward in
Baltimore city with 3000 persons in it, should
send but one? He would ask was there any
equality in that? Where would be the argument
then of a territorial basis, of county sovereignty,
and of county limits? Pass this measure and you
will have killed it dead, never to come to life
again. Why, just as sure as there is a God in
Heaven, if ever the attempt is successful to break
down the distinctive character of the counties,
and to have more territorial districts represented
on this floor, the day will come, and it is not very
far distant, when the universal cry from all parties
of the State will be that representation is not fair in
the House of Delegates. And, a constant reap-
portionment will be called for, until at last, in
the efforts to produce an equalization, the princi-
ple of representation according to population will
be adopted, and the next effort will be to organise
the Senate upon the same basis of a district re-
presentation.

We had not as yet, destroyed our county unity
or individuality. We had simply reduced the
amount of power which had heretofore existed,
and which we were entitled to. But, the broad
principle claiming to be represented here, as
distinct communities of the State, was still pre-
served. And, he prayed to God that they would
never be induced to abandon that principle.

Those were reasons, inseparable to his mind,
why he could not, on reflection, as he hoped to
be able to do, concur with his friend from Fred-
erick, (Mr Johnson.) He had looked upon it
seriously, and it had filled his mind with dismay.

He could not see any possible escape from the
consequences which he had stated such a system
would end in. The plan did not, he believed,
originate with his friend, but with the gentleman
from Frederick, [Mr. Thomas,] now in his eye.
He, [Mr. B.] did not mean to say that the gen-
tleman was not perfectly sincere when he origi-
nated this scheme, in saying that minorities
should be represented. He did not say that the