

And in speaking I will say to those gentlemen, that although the guarantees they propose, are certainly offered in good faith, yet they would prove in practice, wholly unavailing. It is the best assurance in their power to devise, but no paper guarantee was ever yet worth any thing unless a majority of the community, either in numbers or in the Legislative body, were interested in maintaining it. The peculiarity of a certain species of property is admitted, and that it requires protection, but they would deny to those most interested in the property itself the power of protection, that protection which flows from the possession of political power. And while I accord to them sincerity and good faith, I deny that they can give us any security, independent of political power.

Can gentlemen give us a sure guaranty that the same just and kind feelings which they now entertain towards the counties, shall be transmitted as an inheritance to their posterity? Can they answer for the generations that are yet to come, and the million that are in a few years, to populate the city they now represent? Will they say that under no change which time may work in our political condition, there shall be found no clashing of interests, no conflict of passions? Will they who are just now be always just, under whatever temptations of interests, or whatever excitements of the feelings? Shall there be no jealousies in time to come? No resentments? Nothing to mislead the judgment, even if it does not corrupt the feelings? Can those gentlemen guaranty to that extent? I know they cannot. Then permit us to underwrite for ourselves; let us become our own bondsmen, by holding that political power requisite to secure a compliance with the terms of the contract. Short of this, all other security is false, futile and deceptive.

Sir, if the Senate is to operate as a general safety valve to the House, and the whole legislature is to be tied up by constitutional prohibitions, for what good I would ask, is all this clamor about popular rights? Surely there must be some practical application of the principle in the law making power, or the game is not worth the hazard.

Sir, I am partly indebted to one of those gentlemen, (Mr. Prestman,) for the reason of this seeming inconsistency on their part. I understood that gentleman some time ago, when defining his position, to say, that he did not feel himself like his colleague (Mr. Brent,) pledged to his constituents, to go for nothing short of representation according to population, but while he should vote for that proposition he nevertheless felt at liberty to meet gentlemen in a spirit of generous compromise on that question; that he did not expect to obtain all he desired at once.

Sir, coming events cast their shadows before them. I thank that gentleman for his candor.—But that there may be no doubt, on my interpretation of the coming future, I will adduce collateral testimony.

When on the sixth of January past, this body assembled in the other wing of the Capitol, to witness the inauguration of the present Chief Executive of this State; and when amid the

booming of cannon and the clang of music, that ceremony was concluded, I listened with much interest to the eloquent and able address which he put forth to the people of Maryland—my attention was particularly arrested when he referred to the subject of reform. He said:

“Even should no practical reforms result from the labors of the present Convention, (which of course is not supposable,) still, I regard the value of the principle, now established so great in view of the possible future, as to hold the expenses, inconveniences, and even total failure of this first attempt, however in itself deplorable, to be entirely of subordinate importance; for nations, unlike individuals, never die, and can afford to bide their time. What one generation loses by folly another will reach by the wisdom of experience. And, as republics rarely, if ever, retrograde in opinion, as long as they preserve a healthy tone in public morals, we have every cause to hope and believe, that the precedent set in the call of the Convention, will have the effect to enlarge the power of the people, in a more signal manner, hereafter. Whilst, therefore, the people yearn for the enjoyment of those salutary reforms, which right, justice and good policy call for; and although they should possibly be doomed to meet with a total or partial disappointment of their reasonable hopes, they cannot forget to console themselves with the knowledge that the great battle, in fact was fought and won, when the legislature after a steady resistance of twenty years, finally promulgated, and Maryland by an almost unanimous vote, ratified the doctrine, that the people are not enchanged by the fifty-ninth article of the Constitution. This is the entering wedge to the future. This is the key to the treasury of popular rights. With this weapon the people will be resistless, in all future struggles for the extension of their privileges. And it is for this achievement, so full of republican destiny, that I honor and congratulate the citizens of Maryland.” *Value of the principle! precedent set! The entering wedge to the future! Key to the treasury of popular rights!* These are ominous words, proceeding from the ante-chamber of the Convention and ex cathedra in their character.

I could but contrast this language with another part of the same document, when speaking of our federal relation, in which it is said, “it is evident that the minority of the people must be assured of protection from the arbitrary legislative rule of the majority.” But I will say no more on this point. The case is made up, and we must submit to the broad principle itself, that numbers, without qualification or restriction, shall rule the future destiny of this State, or adopted as our motto, “*obsta p. incipis.*” Compromise on this question, will not save us; it ought not to save us. Besides, if we yield at once, it will save the State the expense of another Convention, in which we should meet shorn of our strength, parties to our own political annihilation.

Mr. President, before I proceed to give the platform of Worcester county, I will put certain gentlemen right, as to a supposed feeling existing