

promote and support the present opposition, carrying on, as well by arms, as by the Continental Association, restraining our commerce."

Then they go on and appoint committees of observation in every county, in relation to raising troops for the purposes of this association.

By this Continental Congress the first continental army was formed, and George Washington was appointed commander-in-chief. Continental currency was issued: a general treasury, and a post-office department were created for the "United Colonies." [See 1 Curtis, 37.]

On the 15th of May, 1776, Congress transmitted to the several Colonies the following remarkable "Resolve," which I consider the very basis, and foundation, and origin of the several State governments. And it will be seen from this document how careful they were to speak in the name and on behalf of "the people," and how the new government of our own State was formed by, and spoke in the name of, the people. At page 138 of the Maryland Conventions, will be found this resolve which was sent by the Continental Congress to the Convention of Maryland.

"The President laid before the Convention a letter from the Deputies of this Province in Congress, enclosing the following resolutions, to wit:

"In Congress, May 15, 1776.

"Whereas, His Britannic Majesty, in conjunction with the Lords and Commons of Great Britain, has, by a late act of Parliament, excluded the inhabitants of these United Colonies from the protection of his Crown: And whereas, no answer whatever, to the humble petitions of the colonies for redress of grievances and reconciliation with Great Britain, has been, or is likely to be given, but the whole force of that kingdom aided by foreign mercenaries, is to be exerted for the destruction of the good people of these colonies: And whereas, it appears absolutely irreconcilable to reason and good conscience, for the people of these colonies now to take the oaths and affirmations necessary for the support of any government under the Crown of Great Britain, and it is necessary that the exercise of every kind of authority under the said Crown should be totally suppressed, and all the powers of government exerted under the authority of the people of the colonies, for the preservation of internal peace, virtue and good order, as well as for the defence of their lives, liberties and properties, against the hostile invasions and cruel depredations of their enemies: Therefore,

"Resolved, That it be recommended to the respective Assemblies and Conventions of the United Colonies, where no government sufficient to the exigencies of their affairs has been heretofore established, to adopt such government as shall, in the opinion of the represent-

atives of the people, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents in particular, and America in general."

On page 184, of Maryland Conventions, will be found the action of the Convention, taken some time subsequently, was in favor of the course recommended by Congress; and the following resolution was adopted:

"Resolved, That a new Convention be elected for the express purpose of forming a new government, by the authority of the people only, and enacting and ordering all things for the preservation, safety and general weal of this colony."

And further on we come to another document, which shows that the people of Maryland took up arms in defence of *one great nationality*, and as one people, and which will dispose of what was alleged by the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Belt), that the States acted as sovereignties, and not as one people, in their separation from Great Britain. I now read from page 191 of Maryland Constitutions.

"Whereas, the united colonies have been reduced to the fatal necessity of taking up arms in defence of their indubitable and inestimable rights and liberties; and whereas several of the inhabitants of this colony, lost to every generous sentiment of liberty and of love to their country and posterity, have kept up a traitorous correspondence with, and supplied the British troops and navy with provisions, and some of them have joined in arms and others have acted as pilots on board the enemy's ships and vessels, whereby the safety of this and our sister colonies may be endangered, therefore resolved."

And then the Convention goes on to resolve the penalty of death to any man who may be found in traitorous intercourse, supplying provisions, piloting boats or anything of that kind connected with the enemy. And then at pages 201 and 202 they resolve what they call the declaration of the rights of the people of Maryland. On page 202 they declare—

"We, the delegates of Maryland in Convention assembled, do declare that the King of Great Britain has violated his compact with *this people*, and that they owe no allegiance to him; we have therefore thought it just and necessary to empower our deputies in Congress to join with a majority of the united colonies in declaring them free and independent States, in framing such further confederation between them in making foreign alliances, and in adopting such other measures as shall be judged necessary for the preservation of their liberties," &c.

And this brings us to the Declaration of Independence. Mr. Jeff. Davis, in his message of the 26th of April, 1861, has asserted, and the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Belt), has followed him, that at the time of the Declaration of Independence each "State