

the Government of the United States, but I want her as a Government, to do her duty to the people of her own State. I object to this article because it is susceptible of misconstruction. Gentlemen may contend that it cannot be construed into a direct surrender of State sovereignty.

But I have already occupied the floor too long, and will give way to my friend from Kent, (Mr. Chambers.)

MR. CHAMBERS. O! no sir; your remarks are better than mine could be.

MR. BRISCOE. I better yield, because that may be ironically spoken.

MR. CHAMBERS. O! no, my friend, do not say that; take that back.

MR. BRISCOE. Well, I will say but little more. In some remarks which I made when I offered this amendment to strike out the word "paramount," I referred to some doctrines which Mr. Pinckney, of this State held, and which I think have been held by good men on all sides. He tells you what were the purposes of the Union as made by the States originally. It seems to me we are here about to make a new Union, if we adopt this article. We are about to enter, as Mr. Pinckney says, into this company of full-blown States with a different mark upon our brow, not as equal, but as unequal. Now what does he say is the true theory of this Federal Government of ours, and how do the States stand under it?

"What is this Union? a confederation of States equal in sovereignty, capable of everything which the Constitution does not forbid or authorize Congress to forbid. It is an equal union between parties equally sovereign. It is not a State in the general—but a State as you find it in the Constitution." He says further, if a State should be in this Union in any other view, "crippled and disparaged beyond the other States, it is not with the original Union. For it is a different sort of Union." "How is the Union formed? By equal contributions of power. Make one member sacrifice more than another and it becomes unequal. The compact is of two parts: 1. The thing obtained—Federal rights. 2. The price paid—local sovereignty. You may disturb the balance of the Union either by diminishing the thing acquired or increasing the sacrifice paid. What were the purposes of coming into the Union among the original States? The States were originally sovereign without limit, as to foreign and domestic concerns. But being incapable of protecting themselves singly they entered the Union to defend themselves against foreign violence. The domestic concerns of the people of the States were not in general to be acted on by it. The security of the power of managing this by domestic legislation is one of the great objects of the Union."

Now, I do not pretend to deny that in your sovereign capacity here you have the power to

tear from the brow of the old State of Maryland, the wreath of her free institutions.— You can surrender to the General Government her powers of domestic legislation. But is it wise? is it prudent for us to do so? Mr. Pinckney upon that very subject says: "The free spirit of our Constitution and of our people is no assurance against the pro-pension of unbridled power to abuse, when it acts on colonial dependants rather than ourselves. Free States as well as despots have oppressed those whom they were bound to foster, and it is the nature of man that it should be so. The love of power, and the desire to display it when it can be done with impunity, is inherent in the human heart. Turn it out at the door and it will in again at the window. Humanity too sometimes plays fantastic tricks with power. Time however is fruitful in temptations to convert discretionary power to all sorts of purposes." Time will only demonstrate that if you adopt this article these prophetic warnings will be made the truth of history, and Maryland, by transferring the protective powers of her State Government as now existing, will be made the victim of oppression.

Now, I am unwilling to gratify these gentlemen in what I believe to be their objects. Some of them have been open and bold enough to avow that their object is to carry the powers of the State Government to Washington, and lay them down at the feet of the General Government, to be disposed of by it at will. For one I am unwilling by any possibility of misconstruing this article to give any apology or encouragement for the exercise of any such power. It will be used to infringe upon the rights of the State of Maryland. Unlike gentlemen in that respect, I have seen nothing in the past few years that should at all encourage us to enter upon this new career of reform, and indeed re-organization of the Government. It may come; I fear it will come but too soon. But for one, I declare before high Heaven, I never will by any vote or aid of mine, give any furtherance to this thing, by any possibility of misconstruction of this or any other article that may lead to it.

MR. CHAMBERS. Mr. President, it is not without serious embarrassment, certainly not without regret, that I am on the floor at this moment to address this body upon the subject which has been under discussion for some days. But my position on the committee, and the estimation of my friends, have made it my duty to give the views which I entertain upon this subject; they probably assuming, but mistakably, that its discussion in the committee room has enabled me, and my most respected colleague (Mr. Belt) who has heretofore addressed the house, to obtain a knowledge of some of the views entertained by those who have introduced this proposition here. That opinion, if they entertain