

same legislative body to a repetition of that platform upon which the war was to be waged and upon which peace was to be concluded. Sir, it occurred unfortunately that almost every man of the majority in the House proved to be inconsistent with himself and voted against it. It hardly had a friend amongst those who had before adopted it; and who after adopting it were backed up by the President, the Secretary of State, and all the other members of his cabinet; and by the whole country, except only what then was and still is a minority; a large majority of the people, all except the school of Garrison and Wendell Phillips.

Now, sir, inconsistency, like some other things, has changed. It does not seem any longer a disreputable political act. Not at all; it is quite creditable now. But I am too old to begin life over again—to have things taught me that I could not learn before. I shall never be able to understand this new dictionary, so far as to conform to the late improvements in its definitions of words, whose meanings I have once learned. So far for extraneous matters.

Now, Mr. President, I will say something about the question before us. For, like a great many of the speeches here, what I have said does not prove that we ought to put this article in the bill of rights, or that we ought to reject it.

I think there are good reasons why we ought not to adopt it. In the first place, without regard to any merit or demerit of the proposition itself, I do not think this is a *time* at which to adopt it. There is no man here so young—and we have some very young members—but he must have observed, must have known from the impulses of his own mind and his own feelings, that, when in a state of high excitement, a man's judgment is not so accurate, not so effectual, not to be relied upon to such an extent, as when he is cool, calm and collected. That is an axiom in morals, in the history of human life, about which I suppose there will be no question. Are we now in that condition? Are the people of this State, are those who sent us here, are those who are here, divested of that feeling, that passion, that excitement, which will deny to them the full, fair exercise of their judgment?

I know perfectly well—from a long acquaintance with the world, and I think some knowledge of human nature, for we are all very much alike; men are very much the same, under the same circumstances. I have known too long and too well the inefficacy of addresses to the judgments of men while excited by passion. I ask my friends here, retired as they are within the walls of this house, acting as we are or should be, as the representatives, not of a people excited, inflamed, but acting for all time, acting for moments of peace and calm and composure; acting for the interests of those who are to

represent us in posterity;—I ask gentlemen here if they can, with their hands on their hearts, say that they believe themselves in a condition to examine this subject now as they would examine it if not excited and inflamed by the troubles around us? I ask them to listen to truths which they must know; and which under different circumstances would have the effect of convincing them.

Sir, we have lived under a government established by men than whom the history of the world from its foundation to this hour does not furnish others more distinguished for good sense, and pure unadulterated patriotism. Those men who fought and bled for our independence, and who subsequently formed the political institutions under which we live. I say those men may defy comparison for these characteristics with any set of men who ever breathed on the face of God's earth.

And yet what do we hear? They are denounced as fools; they did not understand their business. The gentleman from Cecil, (Mr. Pugh,) told us in almost so many words, that the men who made the Constitution of 1776, were fools, and those who made the Constitution of 1850 were knaves.

Mr. PUGH. Does the gentleman refer to me?

Mr. CHAMBERS. "Thou art the man."

Mr. PUGH. I wish to say that I never used such words, and when the gentleman from Kent, (Mr. Chambers,) reads what few remarks I did make, he will observe the difference.

Mr. CHAMBERS. Are they here?

Mr. PUGH. They are on record, but they are not yet published. What I said was that there was some apology for those who at that day favored the State rights doctrine.

Mr. CHAMBERS. It was not to that speech that I referred. I allude to a speech upon an altogether different question; on the poll-tax question. The gentleman said that the declaration that "the levying of taxes by the poll was grievous and oppressive," was not true; or rather, to use his own phrase, he "denied the fact." "It was, to be sure, in the old Constitution and the new one." But if I am not greatly mistaken, he said the old Constitution was made by persons who knew nothing about it; and the last one was made by persons whose conduct was governed altogether by partizan motives.

Mr. PUGH. I shall always be willing to be judged by my remarks; they are placed on the record. But I disclaim here now, as I disclaimed at that time, and as I shall always disclaim, making any remarks that can possibly be so interpreted. All that I meant to say then was what I say now, that it is a mistake to state in the terms of the Constitution or otherwise, that a poll-tax is grievous and oppressive, when I know from my own experience, having myself paid a poll-tax, and