

and seek to indulge the wrath of a measureless vengeance, are not friends to the best interests of the country, nor loyal to the Constitution and form of Government which our fathers established for the preservation of republican liberty.

Of all the dangers of the times, the one in my judgment most to be dreaded, is that fatal tendency in the public mind towards the subversion of our old form of Government, and the substitution in its place, of a grand consolidated central power, which wielded by the mere will of a majority, will soon disregard every constitutional check, trample upon their reserved rights, and in time annihilate the States and utterly destroy the Constitution.

Every one at all familiar with the history of the formation and adoption of that instrument, or even with its language, knows that the Federal Government thereby created is a Government of limited powers, and that "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States are reserved to the States respectively or to the people;" that under it no powers can be rightfully exercised by the General Government, or any department thereof, save those expressly delegated, or those necessary and proper to carry the delegated powers into full effect. Such was the construction put upon it by its authors and friends, and such has been its received and authoritative construction for more than three-fourths of a century. It recognizes the continued existence of the States as numbers, as units, not as fractions or districts of the "more perfect Union" thereby formed. It teaches us that the General Government, whilst absolute and supreme in its sphere, must still keep within the limits of its powers, and that the dignity, equality and all the rightful power and authority of the States must be preserved. This is the system of Government, State and Federal, which our fathers thought would secure to themselves and their posterity the blessings of liberty. If that Constitution is to be overthrown, it is fitting it should find its last defenders in Maryland, and find them here in this very Hall where the first steps towards its formation were taken.

But we must not indulge such gloomy anticipations. There is ground for a more cheerful view. Our great Republic will yet, we confidently hope, escape the rocks on which all former republics have been wrecked. In time a better feeling will pervade the Country. Reason must resume its sway over the minds of men, and the blessings of a perfect peace again smile upon a restored Union and a united people. Humbly appealing for our guidance to the Supreme Ruler of States and of Nations, let us do what lies in our power to accomplish such results. Throwing aside all past political differences, let us unite with a firm determination to preserve the welfare of our State; to maintain our cherished Constitutional liberty, and