

to anticipate a divided feeling, upon many of the propositions, upon which they would be required to pass. But they determined, if possible, to merge these minor distinctions, in the higher and common title of CITIZENS OF MARYLAND; and to look to the general welfare,—to the whole state, and to every portion of the state, in its various interests, its relations, and its dependencies. They determined, moreover, to bring with them, into their conference, so much of the spirit of compromise, and of mutual concession, as might be consistent, in each, with a conscientious discharge of his duty. Under these auspices, they have come to the conclusions, which are embodied in this report.

The primary question, submitted to the decision of your committee, had relation to the power of the General Assembly to call a convention, and provide for the election of its members. They were unanimously of the opinion, that the General Assembly has no such power. They believe that the passage of a law for that purpose, without a previous alteration of the constitution, would not merely be the usurpation of a power not entrusted; but a plain violation of an express article of the constitution. The 59th article is in the following words.—“That this Form of Government, and the Declaration of Rights, and no part thereof, shall be altered, changed or abolished, unless a bill so to alter change or abolish the same, shall pass the General Assembly, and be published at least three months before a new election, and shall be confirmed by the General Assembly, after a new election of delegates, in the first session after such new election; provided that nothing in this Form of Government, which relates to the Eastern Shore particularly, shall at any time hereafter be altered; unless for the alteration and confirmation thereof, at least two-thirds of all the members of each branch of the General Assembly shall concur.” Now it is very clear, that the power to *alter, amend or abolish* any part of the form of government, or of the declaration of rights, is reposed by the constitution in the General Assembly, *and in the General Assembly alone*, and by two successive acts, with an intervening election. The General Assembly cannot delegate this power to any other body, however constituted and however created. If the constitution was submitted to a convention, and by