

mountains cut through to connect water courses?—as is contemplated in that great work, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, which is of so much importance in a national, as well as local point of view, and is, at this time, justly exciting an interest so deep and extensive; and which is of such a character and magnitude, as to preclude a hope of its being accomplished, by the exertion of individual states.

The board of public works, created at the last session, being charged with the superintendence and management of all improvements to be executed or patronised by the state, and generally, with all the interests and concerns of this great subject, and with the *special* duty of reporting fully to you, during the *second week* of your session, all their proceedings—we will not encroach upon their province, by entering into any detail upon this interesting topic, but conclude this brief and general view of it, with an assurance that we are duly impressed with its transcendent importance, and that we shall at all times take great pleasure in co-operating with you in the promotion of all proper objects of improvement, and in carrying into effect, so far as may depend on us, every work that you may authorise and provide for.

The subject of the resolution No. 12, engaged a large share of the attention of both houses of Congress, during their last session, and was so far acted upon as to developé such a variety of views and feelings in relation to it, as to render the adoption of any alteration of the existing provisions of the national constitution, in relation to the election of President and Vice President of the United States, highly problematical.

We consider it very desirable that a uniform system of voting for those high officers should be adopted; and we believe the district system preferable to all others; whether the elections shall be made by the people voting *directly* for those officers, or *indirectly*, by electors chosen by, and responsible to them, we consider of less importance; as in either mode, the elections will be effective expressions of their will. But we deem it of paramount consequence that the rights of the respective states, as secured by the compromises upon which the constitution was founded, be preserved sacred and inviolate; and to the small states, (including Maryland particularly) that the *federative* principle upon which the elections are now made, in the event of a failure of the people, in the primary elections to make a choice, be maintained. Adhering to this principle, we esteem it of little consequence, whether the power of contingent choice remains where it is now vested, or, be transferred to some other authority. We believe the house of representatives is as safe and suitable a depository of that power, as any other that can be constituted or provided for, or, any that *exists, other than the people themselves*.

Whether it would be proper and expedient so to change the constitution, as upon a failure of the people on the first trial to make an election, to have in their own hands, and exercise, themselves, the power of making subsequent efforts for that purpose; under all the excitement that such an event will never fail to produce, appears to us to be, at least questionable. And even if the policy and propriety of their having the power in their own hands, was as clear and undoubted, as that it, *of right*, belongs to them, to dispose of as they see proper—it is known that the large states will not agree to deprive themselves of the power to exercise the decisive weight and influence of an undivided vote, in the primary elections, without the abandonment by the small states, of the federative principle which gives them equal weight with the large ones, in contingent choice, and making the elections upon popular principles, or, at least, retaining the same relative power and influence in all subsequent trials. It is, therefore, manifest, that little hope exists of the alterations desirable to us being obtained, without too great a sacrifice—without agreeing to others so destructive of our existing rights and power, as to forbid our assent to them.

The constitution of the United States is the work of some of the wisest heads and purest hearts that were ever devoted to the service of any people.