

the hand of an ancestor, and would save it if possible from the woodman's axe; but if the axe had to be laid to its roots—if it must be given to the flames, and its ashes scattered to the winds of Heaven—without even a twig being left to lay up in the casket of memory—I could not refrain from giving it a tear. 'Tis thus that I feel towards the old Constitution of Maryland. Every man here knows that there are glorious associations and memories connected with it—every body knows that the people of Maryland have lived under it happily and prosperously, and that she now stands—and no son of hers will deny it—one of the brightest stars in the galaxy of this Union.

Yes! they had lived happily under it, they had prospered under it, and now that a new state of things was to be brought about, the end of which we know not, it was most natural that we should feel some little desire to express a sentiment of respect, to pay one tribute, to that which was passing away, which would so soon be

“Gone glimmering thro' the dream of things that were.”

I have, Mr. President, another object in troubling the Convention on this occasion, which I hope will be considered a sufficient reason for my intrusion upon its time and patience. I represent a county, sir, upon this floor, which, by some means or other, (I shall not attempt to say what they were,) has sent a mixed delegation to this Convention—gentlemen who, by their votes here, have given expression to different opinions in regard to this great question of representation. I wish to know, sir, who of these delegates are right—who represented the true sentiments of the people of Montgomery? I call upon them to say who they are. I will express my opinions freely, and in expressing them, will say that they reflect the opinions of a large majority of the people I represent upon this floor. I say this boldly and defy contradiction. I say, sir, that the people of Montgomery never will sanction any plan of representation which recognises population, solely, as its basis—which asserts the doctrine of the absolute right of mere majorities of numbers to rule. My people will not sanction it, in any shape or form whatever; and I, as their representative, cannot sanction it. I say, sir they will not, and I believe I know their feelings and sentiments upon this subject. If this is not so, let those of their delegates here who differ with me deny the truth of what I assert. What! Montgomery desert old St. Mary's now—that noble county, sacred to the memory of the Pilgrim fathers of Maryland, around which were gathered memories and associations which made the heart of every true son of this gallant State throb with pride! Montgomery desert the generous and hospitable southern counties of Maryland, which have done so much for the glory and honor of the State—the names of many of whose sons adorned the history of their country! She desert them, and be willing to see them struck down, shorn of their power, and made mere almoners upon the mercy of Baltimore city and the

upper counties? Never, never, would she consent to this upon any terms whatever; and I assert this here as her representative—nor can I agree thus to trample upon the graves of my ancestors—whose dust sleeps in the bosom of St. Mary's, upon the bank of the beautiful Patuxent!

Beside this, sir, Montgomery had a feeling of self-interest in this matter, for she too was a small county, and if the plan, now under consideration prevailed, it would take from her one half of the political power and influence which she now exercises in the Legislature of Maryland; and, sir, while it adds to the power and strength of the upper counties and the city of Baltimore, it cuts Montgomery down. As a faithful representative and servant of hers, I never can, so help me God, I never will consent to this, let the consequences be what they may.

The interests of Montgomery, sir, are more identified with those of the lower part of Maryland, than they are with those of the upper counties and Baltimore, notwithstanding it has been said that she was a western county. She is divided, as it were, from these counties by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and her market was in the cities of the District of Columbia, and not in Baltimore. She has, too, a large slave-holding interest, which will suffer under the operation of this plan if it should be carried out. For these reasons, sir, she will not agree to be shorn of the power which she has hitherto possessed—the power of self-protection. And, sir, her claims and the claims of southern Maryland, rest upon the soundest foundation of reason, justice and right.

I have heard the rights of the people spoken of, but I have not heard it stated what they were. I have heard the right of mere majorities to rule asserted—but it has been mere assertion. I have heard no proof to establish the truth of this theory. I should like to hear the proof. It is not fair for those who style themselves, *par excellence*, the reformers of the Convention, to push this matter to a conclusion so soon. I should like them before they adopt this proposition (which I believe they will do) to give their reasons for so doing, to the people of Maryland—not to confine their discussions within the walls of a secret caucus—but to give their arguments here, that they may go upon the record—here in the presence of the people openly, boldly and freely.

Let them sustain their theory of the right of majorities to govern under any and all circumstances in the face of day that all may hear them—tell the people of lower Maryland why you strip them of the power they have hitherto possessed—the power to protect their rights and interests by some argument at least to make them believe that you are sincere in the opinions which drive you to do this unholy act, or you will plant a feeling—bitter and rankling—in their bosoms which no time or circumstances can ever obliterate. You will break the ties of brotherhood that have heretofore bound us to you.

It is not my intention to detain the Conven-