

Brent, of Charles, Merrick, Buchanan, Bell, Welch, Chandler, Ridgely, Lloyd, Colston, Constable, Chambers, of Cecil, Miller, McLane, Bowie, Tuck, Spencer, Grason, George, Wright, Thomas, Shriver, Johnson, Gaither, Biser, Annan, Sappington, Stephenson, McHenry, Magraw, Nelson, Thawley, Stewart, of Caroline, Hardcastle, Gwinn, Stewart, of Baltimore city, Brent, of Baltimore city, Sherwood, of Baltimore city, Pressman, Ware, Fiery, John Newcomer, Harbine, Michael Newcomer, Brewer, Anderson, Weber, Hollyday, Slicer, Fitzpatrick, Parke, Shower, Cockey and Brown—55.

So the Convention refused to reconsider their vote on the said order.

BASIS OF REPRESENTATION.

The Convention resumed the consideration of the special order of the day, being the consideration of the several reports of the committee on representation.

Mr. DIRICKSON addressed the Convention, as follows:

Mr. President:—After witnessing the anxiety betrayed this morning, by gentlemen in various quarters of the Hall, to proceed at once to the decisive vote upon the great question now before us, I shall not long weary your patience by a useless and unnecessary consumption of your time. Indeed, the many beautiful, able and eloquent remarks, which, since the very inception of this debate, have been constantly falling, and to which all listened with so much of interest and pleasure, have so completely placed the whole subject before us in all its mighty magnitude, as to scarce render necessary the utterance of one single additional word. Sir, the time was in the halcyon days of the past—and in this very capitol—when the power of argument and rhetoric might be invoked to do its proper and legitimate influence—when the strong chord of sympathy might be struck, and every heart tremble responsive to the melody of its touch. But those days and hours seem to have gone forever. During the progress of this discussion, link after link of the magic chain that once bound us closely together, has been ruthlessly and wrecklessly rent assunder, and now, here, where peace and harmony should dwell, discord, wild and unrestrained, reigns and holds its revels. Strange, too, and novel is our position amid the changing, eventful scenes that are passing in our midst. An annunciation clear, calm, solemn, has distinctly gone forth from one among the most eminent of this body, (the oracular voice yet seems ringing in mine ear,) that this grave question has already been weighed, prejudged, resolved upon elsewhere. The “unholy bond” has been signed, sealed and ratified, doubtless by the most rigid caucus formality; and, when I look around upon this intellectual and distinguished assemblage—though my gaze meets many a cold, relentless eye—no Portia is seen, the fullness of whose wisdom may detect “the single drop of blood” that is to nullify and destroy the damning scroll. Under such circumstances, and impressed with such convictions, naught but the

sternest sense of duty to those who have commissioned me, in part, to watch over and guard their interests, could break that silence now in harmony with my every feeling. Sir, was it consistent with the grave solemnity of the subject under discussion, gladly would I wander forth amidst the mighty ocean of fancy, culling and gathering the rarest and richest flowers to lay as a votive offering at the shrine of that beauty, (pointing to the lobbies,) with which we are now so graced and honored. But mine is not the task to paint the delicate tints of the rainbow’s varying color, or fashion cushions of roses upon which the imagination might delight to pillow. I am here for a sterner and loftier purpose—I come to speak for the rights and privileges of as noble and gallant a constituency as any within the limits of our State—aye, to war, if need be, to the death, against that proposition, which, in my humble judgment, seeks to invade and destroy their very political liberty itself. With their feelings, every impulse and sympathy of my nature beats in entire and perfect unison, and my only object in addressing the Convention, is, that their voice, at least, may be heard, ere the unhallowed deed which mortal hand cannot stay, shall be finally and irrevocably done.

The county of Worcester occupies a position widely differing from that held by any other isolated community in our whole commonwealth. Located upon the extreme south-eastern border—entirely shut out from every central advantage—away from the artificial arteries through which the wealth and commerce of the nation may be destined to flow—cut off by nature from the very mart which the generous liberality of her own hand has helped to rear—she still stands a bright and shining example amid her more fortunate sister counties, with a character unstained and unsullied, and with a heart unceasingly throbbing with patriotic devotion and regard for that proud old State of which she is a part. The mighty ocean that has ever laved her white bosom is not truer to her coast, or deeper in its profundity, than is her abiding affection for that escutcheon, which is alike the emblem of our untarnished honor and glorious renown. The pages of our earliest history bear the record of her attachment and devotion to the eternal principles of liberty, and the mighty effort with which, regardless of present benefit or future hope, she triumphed over every prejudice, and rallied to the rescue of our common birth-right, the State’s integrity, in that dark hour when the clouds hung the heaviest and looked the blackest, speaks with a fervent and thrilling eloquence which not only appeals to your justice, but extorts your regard, respect and highest admiration.

In view then of such facts—in view of the peculiar remoteness of her situation from the great common interest—and with the bitter experience graven upon the memory by past and present toiling—no wonder that every feeling of sensibility is aroused, and every suspicion awakened into the liveliest excitement, when amid the changing scenes and startling developments of each succeeding hour, she learns that she is to