

very welkin justly ring with the fearful cry of *Et tu Brute*

With us this is not a question of power, but of self-preservation and liberty. We estimate it not by figures and measure it not by words. It rises high above all other considerations. Urge then no longer a project that leaves us entirely at the mercy of numbers, and places our every interest under the wheel of a juggernaut that may in an instant crush them in its course. Tell us not of coming revolution, it has no terrors with men who are struggling against colonial bondage. Point not to the fate of Charles the first, the lofty scaffold—the gaping multitude—the slaughtered King—the whole dark and bloody scene is before us, and we shake not in our resolution. Sir, we are struggling for *liberty*—our position is one of glorious sublimity. We cannot, dare not compromise it. Liberty has no compromise that can endanger it. It has an alternative. 'Tis death—and brave men prefer it to degradation. Better, infinitely better, that the waters of the Chesapeake and Atlantic should mingle and dance their revels o'er our once happy land, than that the soil in which our ancestral bones are sleeping, should again be reduced to that slavish position from which more than three score years ago, by the most dauntless patriotism and energy, I trust it was forever and eternally freed.

Mr. JOHNSON made some remarks, which will be published hereafter.

Mr. DONALDSON said:

Mr. President:—I confess to having felt a certain anxiety to get the floor, before the time should arrive for taking the question on this subject of apportionment. I desire to state calmly and dispassionately, some of the reasons which will govern the course of my votes on the various plans now under consideration, and on the amendments which may be proposed. The clock warns me that I must do this briefly; and I will therefore refrain in regard to some of my topics, from going into as much detail as I would have done, had I succeeded in obtaining the floor at an earlier stage of the debate.

In the present position of affairs, I cannot agree with the large number of members of this Convention, who regard the apportionment of representation as a subject of overwhelming importance. I never have believed that a change in the apportionment was one of the great reforms which were contemplated by the people of Maryland, when they decided on making a new Constitution. There is no such substantial evil resulting from the present basis; there is no such prospective advantage to be realized from any practicable alteration in it, as did induce, or could have induced the call of a convention. There are many subjects before us, which to my mind, seem of far greater consequence than this, when I consider their bearing upon the real interests, the substantial prosperity and happiness of the people. My time is too limited for me to do more than merely allude to them. Yet, ever since the assembling of this body, the question of apportionment has been much agitated around and among us; a great deal of strong

local feeling has been mingled with it; and gentlemen from almost every quarter of the State have joined in proclaiming it to be a question paramount in importance to all others. I do not know whether the same state of feeling has been communicated to the people; it is probable enough that it has. But seeing the light in which the subject was viewed by others, I thought it my duty to consider it in all its bearings, with the greatest deliberation, in order that I might act understandingly for the benefit of my constituents and of the State at large. So doing, I made up my mind at an early day as to the course I would pursue—not, to be sure, as to every detail, but as to the general features of the plan which I would prefer, and the great objects to be aimed at in the settlement. Further reflection has only confirmed me in the conclusion at which I first arrived. I have been most anxious to form an unbiassed judgment, and I have scrupulously kept myself free from the embarrassment of any association. I have entered into no conference, except that between individual and individual, in which I have always been ready for a candid interchange of opinion. I have not been willing that there should fall upon my limbs even the shadow of a chain, which might deceive any eye into the notion that I was bound, or that my movements were in the slightest degree restrained.

I have said, Mr. President, that I do not consider this subject of overwhelming importance in the present position of affairs. I said so, because representation according to population in the whole State, is entirely out of the question. Had I thought there was danger of adopting that principle, I should have been as much concerned as others. But at an early day in our session, I found that there was no such danger. The actual vote of the Convention has decided that point; and it was in fact well settled among us long before the vote was taken. Against that principle I have battled zealously, with whatever ability I may possess, both before the people and upon this floor. I always shall battle against it. The State of Maryland is peculiarly situated in this respect, and is unlike any other State of the Union. It contains one large city, which, before the lapse of many years will concentrate within its limits, the greater portion of the population and wealth of the State. I believe that the principle of representation according to population, strictly applied to us, would after a while give to a single aggregated interest, an undue preponderance, which might be used unjustly to the injury of other interests.—But that enemy is now out of the field; or rather it lies stark dead upon the field. As far, at least, as this Convention is concerned, it cannot even be galvanized into any show of vitality; although under the eloquence of the two gentlemen from Baltimore, it may have seemed to give a few melancholy *post mortem* twitches. All the blows of the gentleman from Montgomery, [Mr. Kilgour.] were bestowed upon an unresisting dead body.