

to elevate his fortunes and gratify his aspirations; such aspirants would unite and concentrate, and at the end of this political cycle, a grand effort would be made by the aggregate mass. It was like accumulating back water, or collecting steam with the safety-valve closed. He was for giving it vent as fast as it was generated. He did not desire ten years, during which ambitious men would be preparing a lever which every man of them would seize at the appointed time, though every man would work it for his own exclusive benefit. It was a law of our nature, felt by the masses as well as individuals, that when an object is extremely accessible, the desire of possessing it is very much diminished, while to withhold it, is a certain means of magnifying its charms, and whetting the appetite for its possession. We were true sons of mother Eve—the forbidden tree yields the fruit most to be desired.

Mr. BRENT of Baltimore city, observed that he would not have said any thing on the subject again, but for the remarks of the gentleman from Frederick. (Mr. Thomas,) yesterday, in regard to the objections he pointed out in his, (Mr. B.'s) proposition. This morning, too he had thought proper to refer to the objections taken by him to the proposition, which he, (Mr. B.) would answer as briefly as possible. It seemed to him that this was one of the most important subjects that could come before the Convention, and he religiously believed it would have the most important bearing upon the question of adopting the new Constitution. He believed that imperfect as they might make the Constitution, if they guaranteed to the people the right, independent of Legislatures, independent of political combinations and caprice, the right to pass upon the great question whether they would have a Convention; and, if they should decide to have it, that they should obtain that boon, the first of their desire, without any mortal control to prevent it. He did believe that the people would be disposed to accept the Constitution, although it might afford only partial relief, if this great right was secured.

Mr. B. next proceeded to examine the various propositions pending, in relation to calling another Convention, and coming down to the mode proposed by the majority of the committee on that subject, he remarked that the report of the committee instructed the Legislature to pass an act to take the sense of the people, leaving the respective Houses to make the necessary arrangements for carrying out their will; in fact, giving them the control of the matter, and the power to say that the Convention should sit thirty or sixty days; that they should be restricted in their amount of pay, &c., thus controlling the whole action of the Convention, by controlling the purse strings of the treasury. If the proposition passed in that form, he would vote for it only as a *dermior resort*, after failing in his own proposition. Many members of this Convention had taken this broad issue, that they would not trust the Governor, although we might make it a solemn constitutional duty on him to issue his proclamation to the people, and leaving no discretion with him to act or not. Now he, (Mr.

B.,) was more disposed to trust the Governor than a legislative body. And why? Because where the responsibility was divided among a number of men, we knew there was not half the moral responsibility felt by each member as by one single head. It had become a proverb that a corporation had no soul. It was because members, collectively acting in their aggregate capacity, did not feel the same moral obligation and responsibility that an individual did.

He would say this, without taking into the account the political considerations which very frequently govern and warp the judgment and discretion of men in legislative bodies. It seemed to him there were a thousand modes by which a legislature desiring to defeat and nullify the injunctions of the Constitution, could effectually do it, and the people might have to wait ten years longer. And where was the responsibility? Divided between the two houses. But the greatest responsibility would rest upon this Convention, for having placed this great popular right at the mercy of the legislature.

With regard to the great constitutional duty enjoined upon the Governor, and about the execution of which, some gentlemen had expressed their fears, he would only say that he did not entertain them.

The duty was one only of a mere ministerial character, and he did not for a moment believe that a Governor would dare to violate a solemn injunction placed upon him in the Constitution. If he did, he was liable to be impeached. But the legislature could not be impeached.

It had been said here, that in 1860, a Governor might be elected hostile to reform. Now, that was to presuppose a very unnatural state of things; for, if the people in their aggregate vote, should express their desire at the ballot-box to have a Convention they would certainly not elect a man hostile to Constitutional reform. If a man elected to the office of Governor should not carry out the people's wish in this respect, he would violate every trust and confidence reposed in him, and be guilty of moral treason, and the whole tremendous responsibility would be on him.

Mr. HOWARD remarked, that they had reached a stage in their discussions which involved the most intricate, abstract, and unexplored principles that they had yet encountered. It was this: whether it was wise to provide for a periodical recurrence of a vote of the people of the State in relation to a change in their organic law. Upon that question they had no experience to guide them—noting that was definite and reliable. Now, the gentleman from Kent, [Mr. Chambers,] and the gentleman from Dorchester, [Mr. Phelps,] both agreed with him, and indeed he believed they all agreed that what they were in search of now was to tranquilise the public mind, at least for a long interval. That was the desideratum. How should they reach it? It was his opinion that a provision, like that under consideration—much more than that which was offered yesterday by the gentleman from the city of Baltimore, (Mr. Brent) would produce that very effect more completely than any other sys-