

You may break, you may shatter the vase, if you will,
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still!

Remarks of Mr. BOWIE, Friday, May 2nd, 1851.

Mr. BOWIE said he regretted he felt himself compelled to say something on this proposition, because the vote he intended to give to-day, would come in direct conflict with the vote he gave yesterday on the proposition submitted by the gentleman from Frederick, (Mr. Johnson,) looking to a general division of the election districts in the State. He had never felt any doubt either in regard to the propriety, or as to the duty which this Convention owed to a very large minority in the commercial city of Baltimore, numbering, as his friend from Kent (Mr. Chambers,) said, about 80,000. In his opinion, some provision ought to be made in the Constitution, by which so large a proportion of citizens of Maryland should be represented in the Legislature of the State. And it was, because, like the gentleman from Frederick, he was opposed to the influence which large masses could bring to bear upon any portion of this government, that he had favored the districting of Baltimore city. But, when you go beyond certain limits, when you undertake to divide the counties, small as they are, into districts, and permit little knots of 3 or 400 voters to be represented in the House of Delegates as municipal districts, you are carrying out the principle to too great an extent. The only reason why it was proper to sub-divide Baltimore city, as was well stated by the gentleman from Kent, was, because the minority there, was so numerous as to amount to 80,000.

But, as to the idea of little minorities, scattered throughout the State—say of 2, 3 or 400—being represented, was a proposition he never would, nor could sanction. He saw no propriety in it, because by those combinations of minorities, you produced a result, in fact, by which minorities would exercise all power: which was a monstrous proposition. But, he had voted yesterday for the proposition of his friend from Frederick, (Mr. Johnson.) He had not given to it much reflection. He had not looked at it carefully, or run it out in all its consequences, but upon more mature consideration, he saw in that proposition nothing more or less than a foundation, laid deep and immovable, of a general representation of the State, based upon population hereafter, including the city of Baltimore.

He would ask, if we did not understand that the House of Delegates was to be composed, and is composed of delegates from the various counties of the State, as such? Were we to be told that in all time to come, our county limits were to be obliterated? Our county individuality destroyed? That we were no longer to send delegates to the House of Delegates, from the different counties of the State, as such; but that our county municipality, or as some gentlemen had thought proper to call it our county sovereignty, was to be forever gone? That they were to have districts laid off in the counties, and that repre-

sentatives were to be sent immediately from the districts, and not from the counties?

Now, the moment we sought to obliterate and annihilate this idea of county independence, then the State would be laid off—including Baltimore city, into a number of districts, and they would be represented here as districts, and districts only.

How long did they suppose, if this system should prevail, would the representatives of counties be able to maintain themselves on the ground they had planted themselves, of territorial representation?

The Convention of 1776 met upon a common platform, and they had solemnly agreed to stand on that platform. If you are determined to destroy our county individuality, he asked gentlemen, as sensible men—he asked those who represented the counties of the State what argument would they be enabled to use with a member who came from Baltimore, for the purpose of carrying out the principle of representation according to population? Why, he would ask, should a district in Kent county, which had but 400 voters, send one representative here, when one ward in Baltimore city with 3000 persons in it, should send but one? He would ask was there any equality in that? Where would be the argument then of a territorial basis, of county sovereignty, and of county limits? Pass this measure and you will have killed it dead, never to come to life again. Why, just as sure as there is a God in Heaven, if ever the attempt is successful to break down the distinctive character of the counties, and to have more territorial districts represented on this floor, the day will come, and it is not very far distant, when the universal cry from all parties of the State will be that representation is not fair in the House of Delegates. And, a constant reapportionment will be called for, until at last, in the efforts to produce an equalization, the principle of representation according to population will be adopted, and the next effort will be to organise the Senate upon the same basis of a district representation.

We had not as yet, destroyed our county unity or individuality. We had simply reduced the amount of power which had heretofore existed, and which we were entitled to. But, the broad principle claiming to be represented here, as distinct communities of the State, was still preserved. And, he prayed to God that they would never be induced to abandon that principle.

Those were reasons, inseparable to his mind, why he could not, on reflection, as he hoped to be able to do, concur with his friend from Frederick, (Mr. Johnson.) He had looked upon it seriously, and it had filled his mind with dismay.

He could not see any possible escape from the consequences which he had stated such a system would end in. The plan did not, he believed, originate with his friend, but with the gentleman from Frederick, [Mr. Thomas,] now in his eye. He, [Mr. B.] did not mean to say that the gentleman was not perfectly sincere when he originated this scheme, in saying that minorities should be represented. He did not say that the