

ment upon them until they are in order. I shall then have one or two words to say upon them by way of explanation. I will state in advance that I think this is all wrong in principle, and wrong in policy. And I think that those who vote to put such provisions in the constitution will live to regret their action here.

As I have said, they will find examples, numerous examples, all along the pages of history, of the unfortunate civil wars which have distracted other countries, and no country more than Great Britain, during a long series of years. Those pages of history stand as landmarks, and as buoys, to warn us against the rocks and quicksands upon which other men under like circumstances have wrecked themselves. It is proposed now to follow in the very footsteps, in the very track of those who have been shipwrecked, and who have been involved in all the calamities and destruction of fire and sword. This nation, with all these examples before it, blinded by passion, is following in that track to a certain destruction as befell them, unless the people of this country shall take the sober second thought, discard passion, and call to the helm of state some statesman who is animated by magnanimous views, who can look beyond party to his whole country, and to the interests of the human race; to the well-being and preservation of all that is endeared to every one of us; a man who shall be able to still and calm these troubled elements, and restore to us the blessings of civil liberty and of good government, and of good order and harmony in society.

Mr. MARRBURY. I regret that I was not here when the debate was opened upon this report. Being one of the members of the committee that made it, I felt an interest in it, and should have liked to have been here and heard all that has been said by gentlemen on both sides.

There was a great deal in the report of the majority of the committee that was objectionable to me. There is also a great deal that is objectionable to me in the amendments which have been made to it. The proposition now before this convention, the amendment of the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Stirling) seems to me to embody some of the very objections that I entertain to the first section of this report. The word "loyal," a word of infinite signification, is contained in the first section, and is exceedingly objectionable to me. And I see the same word incorporated in the proposition of the gentleman from Baltimore city, now under consideration.— And I propose to submit a few remarks, addressed principally to the words "true allegiance," and the words, "loyal citizens" contained in the proposition now before this convention.

The right of free election lies at the very foundation of republican government. It is

the very essence of the constitution. To violate that right, and much more to transfer it to any other set of men, is a step leading immediately to the dissolution of all government. The people of Maryland have always in times past, guarded with more than vestal care this fundamental principle of self-government. By constitutional provisions and legislative enactments, they have sought to provide against every conceivable effort that might be made to suppress the voice of the people. They have spurned the idea of excluding any one on account of his religious or political opinions. Is it not unwise and impolitic to depart from this established policy of the State, by introducing words into our constitution which are calculated to revive and foster that spirit of crimination and recrimination already existing to an alarming extent between parties in this State? The word loyal has come to be, of late, a word susceptible of such various construction, and has so often been prostituted by the minions of power, to accomplish partizan ends, that to incorporate it into the constitution would be nothing more nor less than creating an engine of oppression, to be used by whatever party might hold for a time the reins of power.

The test of loyalty that would suit one party, would not answer the demands of another. There are those who would determine, that all who do not humbly bend the obsequious knee to the authorities at Washington, and adopt as their political creed all of the heresies that emanate from the white-house, or are fulminated at the capitol, are disloyal. There are those who would denounce as disloyal all who will not subscribe to the doctrine that these States were made by the Union and not the Union made by the States.

Again, there are those who would be pronounced disloyal by some, because they objected to being required to take an oath at every turn, and before every attempt to do anything affecting the interests of the State, or themselves individually. And yet again, there are those who, believing that the constitution of the United States, and the laws made in pursuance thereof, are the true standard of loyalty, would consider those disloyal who would violate the one, or attempt to evade the other. It is against this latter class of persons, I presume, that this provision that it is now proposed to incorporate in the constitution is intended to operate.

If the proposition has run the usual course with those emanating from the majority, if it has gone through the crucible of a caucus, and makes its appearance here refined and purified for adoption, it matters not who may speak, or what may be adduced in the way of argument to show its folly. Hoping, however, that even should this be so, there is yet patriotism enough left in the State to secure its welfare against the most insidious attacks of