

representation. And the gentleman from Baltimore (Mr. Stirling) does not apply even to his own section of the State, and to the city of Baltimore the naked principle of representation according to population, and is unwilling to make an application to apply that principle; but he is in favor of an arbitrary rule, and its relaxation in a single county of the State. He has intimated that he should like to know why a man in the city of Baltimore is not equal to the man that lives in the old fields in the county of Prince George's or of Calvert. Now, sir, some wise men have said, and I believe it to be a solemn and indisputable truth, it was no less a statesman than Thomas Jefferson who said it, that in a republic, large cities are sores upon the body politic. He has displayed wisdom in other things. I leave that question between the gentleman from Baltimore city and Mr. Jefferson.

I will tell the gentleman why I hold that a man in the city of Baltimore is not entitled to be fully represented here in population the same as a citizen of my own county or the county of Prince George's. There is no State in the Union situated like the State of Maryland. We have here a small State, in population and territory, and a large, progressive, and powerful city. I am in many things proud of that city. I am willing, so far as I am concerned, when participating in the legislation of the State, and I think what I have done in the past will bear me out in the assertion, to contribute, so far as I think consistent with the public welfare, to the advancement of that great city. But when you come to the question of representative power, when the gentleman asks me why the men in the city of Baltimore should not in representative power in the State rank head by head with the men in the rural districts of the State, I will tell him that the citizen in the rural districts of the State is a permanent inhabitant; but when you come to a large city like the city of Baltimore, there is always a floating population passing away, migrating, having in fact no identity of interest with the population of the State. I have nothing to say to the suggestion of the gentleman who drew a comparison between men living in the city and in old fields, further than to say to him that there are some other sections of the State besides old fields. I leave it to the sound judgment and good sense of the convention to determine whether, these things being so, as they are undeniably, I think, it would not be fair in making this rule, because you have not adopted a principle, for us to permit the counties to protect themselves in their apportionment.

The principle, which is no principle but an arbitrary rule, which you have established, gives to the city of Baltimore eighteen representatives. The gentleman has very frankly said that is all he can get, and he is satisfied.

They took particular pains however, to exclude some three or four of the counties from what they said was the rule or principle. They departed from the rule or principle for the city of Baltimore.

Mr. STIRLING. We restricted it.

Mr. BRISCON. They restricted the rule, and made the representation less than the rule required; and when they came to my county, the small county of Calvert, they restricted it to one delegate. I was about to offer a proposition to the convention, that no county should have less than two, but the previous question cut me off. Now I say that so far as the rule applies to any theory of representation, under no government on God's earth can you reach a true and exact representation as to numbers. Under the rule here, an excess of 2,500 over the 5,000 will allow an additional representative. We have a white population of upwards of 6,000.

Mr. STROCKBRIDGE. The census says 3,997; three less than 4,000.

Mr. BRISCON. Very well; that is the standard so far as the principle of representation is concerned; but I know the population is about 6,000. This matter of representation has never under our government been reduced to any well settled principle. And if the principle always has been departed from, I think you cannot make a rule which will not require to be restricted in some particular instances. I ask if there is a State in the Union which has established a rule, from which they have not departed for the protection of some section or the smaller counties of the State? I think that the gentlemen representing the counties should look to it that in the advancing stride of power in the city of Baltimore, it does not absorb all the political power of the State. I do not believe the people of the city of Baltimore demand, and I do not presume these gentlemen came here prepared to demand for them, or to say that we have any authentic voice from the city of Baltimore demanding a representation according to their numbers.

Mr. STIRLING. I should like to ask the gentleman whether every political party representing the city of Baltimore in this hall does not express the same thing? I should like to hear the gentleman say whether he conceives that his political friends in Baltimore are opposed to being represented here?

Mr. BRISCON. I know that they opposed it in 1850; for in the convention which met here, we had the power, and they did not then demand representation according to population. That is a historical fact in which the proceedings of that convention will bear me out.

Mr. STIRLING. They were in the same position that we are—not fools enough to demand what they knew they could not obtain.

Mr. BRISCON. You may imagine that; but I refer to the remarks of Mr. Brent, of the city.