

Convention assembled, in 1776, except wherein they have been subject to subsequent alteration and amendment,—some of the highest powers of Sovereignty, such as the war, peace, and treaty making powers &c.; the State exercises, through her representatives in the Congress of the United States, in conjunction with the representatives of the other states of the Union, according to the provisions of the Constitution of the United States.

But there are powers of Sovereignty inherent in the mass of People, in every Republican Government, and which are not granted to the discretion of the ordinary Legislature,—These are the highest rights and powers of self-government; the right to dissolve the existing form of government, and to create a new one, of essential different features, and character. And is not this the highest of all sovereign powers, the very one supposed to have been exercised by the General Assembly of Maryland in the supposed Cession?

That act, proposed and professed, in the most unreserved and unqualified terms, to cede to the Congress and government, of the United States “in full and absolute right and exclusive jurisdiction, as well of soil as of persons residing or to reside thereon” a portion of the undisputed territory of Maryland, inhabited by citizens of the State of Maryland, inhabited by a portion of the people who were bound together under a common government; under a social compact, and entitled to all the rights, privileges, and immunities of citizens of Maryland,—this portion of the citizens of Maryland, were, by the supposed Cession, placed under a jurisdiction foreign as to them;—and under the power of a “Legislation so exclusive” that they themselves have had no voice in it. By the supposed Cession, they are deprived of the right of self-government, of the right to participate, by representation, in the making of laws which affect their lives, liberties and property, and according to the construction given by some to the terms “exclusive Legislation,” are subject to a power absolutely despotic.

Had the General Assembly a right to establish a despotism over any portion of the citizens or territory of Maryland? If they could established a despotism over any portion, why not over the entire State? If they could cede to another power the full and absolute right, and exclusive jurisdiction as well of soil, as of persons over a portion of Montgomery County why could they not, in like manner, cede “full and absolute right, and exclusive jurisdiction” over the whole State? The committee therefore cannot find any thing in the nature of the du-