

which they are the advocates, is not the reverse of truth, firmness and State pride; and that it is not inconsistent with the position assumed by the "sages of Maryland" during the Revolutionary war. The ground she maintained at that time, and during the confederation, was in direct opposition to the views contained in the report of the majority of the committee. They then contended that the crown lands, "if wrested from the common enemy by the blood and treasure of the thirteen States, ought to be deemed a common property, subject to the disposition of Congress, for the general good;" that the country, unsettled at the commencement of the war, claimed by the British crown, and ceded to it by the treaty of Paris, should be considered a common property, subject to be parcelled out by Congress, into free, convenient and independent States.

The last two objects in view, the first and most important of which was to preserve something like an equality among the members of the Union, by reducing the limits of Virginia and other large States, and forming the territory claimed by them, into distinct and independent States. Her next object was to resist the exclusive claims of the large States to the crown lands within their respective limits, and to place them under the *disposition of Congress*, for the general good. The sages of Maryland had then no desire to place the proceeds of the public territory under the disposition of the State Legislatures for the separate benefit of the States.

The majority of the committee, as if for the very purpose of refuting their own opinions, refer to the debates in the convention of 1787, from which it appears that Mr. Madison proposed to give to Congress the power to dispose of the unappropriated lands of the United States, and that Luther Martin then moved to take up the amendment, which provided "that nothing in this constitution shall be construed to affect the claim of the United States to vacant lands ceded to them by the treaty of peace."

Mr. Martin was one of the sages of Maryland, and one of the most eminent advocates of her rights, yet *he* considered the vacant territory as belonging to the United States. Perhaps the majority of the committee consider the States in their several capacities, and the *United States* as the same; and that to name the latter is "distinctly" to name each particular State. If they were identical, it would make very little difference whether a particular fund were placed under the control of Congress, or the State Legislatures.