

alteration and confirmation thereof, at least two thirds of all the members of each branch of the General Assembly shall concur.”

It is perfectly clear therefore, that the Legislature have no power to alter, change, or abolish the constitution, except in the mode prescribed, that is, by an act for that purpose, passing at one session, and being confirmed at the next, after publication as directed. But it is said, that this restriction is only applicable to the Legislature, and that the people did not mean to impose limitations upon their own power, to alter, or abolish their constitution at pleasure. If it is meant by this to say, that the right of *revolution*, was not intended to be abandoned by the adoption of the constitution, the proposition will not be denied; but if those who take this ground, mean to be understood as contending, that a bare numerical majority of the people of the State, have at any time the power to change the constitution, and thus supersede the power of the Legislature over the subject, the undersigned wholly dissent from the proposition.

The undersigned believe, that the constitution not only originated from the people, but was founded in compact, and that a part of the compact, into which the people of Maryland entered in 1776, when the constitution was adopted, was, that it should be only altered or abolished in the mode prescribed.

This first section of the Declaration of Rights affirms, “that all government of right, originates from the people, *is founded in compact only*, and instituted solely for the good of the whole.” The convention was then framing a Constitution and Form of Government, and to the Legislative Department of the Government, they determined to give the power to change or abolish it in the mode prescribed, and in no other. They were themselves exercising a revolutionary power, under which they claimed and exerted the right to destroy the pre-existing government, and adopt a new one founded upon principles of human liberty. In order to avoid the necessity of having recourse to this extreme remedy again, they thought fit to give to the Legislature, about to be created, the power to alter the fundamental law, whenever the changed circumstances of society, or the public good should require it. They did not deem it necessary to reserve to the people in terms, the right of revolution to relieve themselves from intolerable oppression, because that was an unalienable right, of which they could not divest themselves if they would; but in order to guard against the necessity of having recourse to such a remedy, they imparted to the constitution a self-healing power, by which unforeseen mischiefs might be cured, as they should arise.

But for this provision in the constitution, restricting the power of alteration or change, to the Legislature, it is confidently believed, it never would have been adopted. According to the distribution of political power then made, it was believed, the small and thinly settled counties, would be able to protect themselves against the larger and more populous.

Each county was to be entitled to four Delegates to the General