

frame. No section of the State had a right or reason to complain. And even if it exhibited some imperfections in theory, it was so far an improvement upon the arbitrary system of our English inheritance, that it were ingratitude to quarrel with defects, which the experience of the world afforded little opportunity for detecting. But the course of years has altered those circumstances, which made the constitution of 1776, a model among the creations of our sister States. Changes in the current of population, growth of new interests, larger experience of business, have demonstrated that the old constitution, though an admirable nursery for greatness, is no proper theatre for the development of the growing energies of the State. At first, it was a small, compact, well contrived system of barriers, where, shut in by safe restraints, the infant State, newly released from tutelage, exercised its maturing strength in safety. Enlargements however, were soon needed, and it is not saying too much, when we declare, that the compact, well proportioned, but confined area has not always experienced the supervising care of skilful architects in the alterations which have been made.

The great difficulty which exists in reforming the constitution is, that it cannot be effected without a new compromise between the local interests which are concerned therein. That compromise, the Legislature is in no position to effect. Its members are not sent here, as the best representatives of local interests. The unhappy extension of party dominion over our State affairs, with which it has no natural concern, prevents us from considering county delegations as the undoubted representatives of county interests, as they ought in principle to be. However material it may be, when the election of a Senator of the United States is to be decided, that one party or the other should be in the majority in the far greater number of cases, the feelings and principles which control the selection of the Delegates and State Senators, have no concern whatever with our local interests. Yet to a body thus selected, it is proposed to leave the sole and ultimate decision of questions which are entirely foreign to the general policy of the United States.

This evil is one, the existence of which all parties will confess. While therefore, the undersigned admit that the constitution, as it now stands, wisely provides that the legislature shall have the power to change the method of government, provided in so doing it follows the course therein prescribed, because of the inconvenience and peril even, of summoning conventions of the people upon trivial occasions, they respectfully suggest that the legislature is in reason and common sense, not the authority to which organic changes ought to be exclusively referred.

The undersigned, however, will not occupy the time of the House by general arguments upon the fitness of a convention to make such reforms, as may be needful in the present Constitution of Maryland. The bill, which they have reported, provides for the taking of the votes of the people throughout the State upon