

of old and uncompromising prejudices,—and, now, witness the serene sky, which looks down upon the work of their hands! Call to mind the fierce denunciations, which have so recently given way to cordial approval. See the measures, once denounced as revolutionary, agrarian, and destructive, now quietly going into operation, under the solemn sanction of the new Constitution. What a commentary is not this, to be sure, upon the folly of human extravagance and passion; and what a lesson to those, who, whether from fear or disinclination, may seek, hereafter, to check the onward march of liberal Institutions. I awaken these memories of the past, not that old wounds may be opened, nor, new ones inflicted; but, on the contrary, that we may all learn wisdom from experience, and store it up for future use. We shall, certainly, have need for all we can gather. In 1851, a new Constitution is adopted, by a popular majority of ten thousand, providing, as it does, for reforms, in every department of the Government, far more radical and extensive, than those, which were contended for by the Nineteen Senatorial Electors, in 1836, and which were *then* pronounced to be utterly subversive of the public liberties and prosperity. Consider this! And, let it be an everlasting memento.

It is not to be said that, this Constitution is perfect, by any means. In the progress of your legislation, you will find proof to the contrary. It will become your duty to fill up the chasms. That it might have been more complete, is very apparent. Whether or not, a large share of the blame of its imperfections is to be charged to undue opposition to its leading features, in the Convention, is a question which, no doubt, has already been correctly decided by public opinion. The delay, occasioned by stubborn debate, certainly caused unusual and injurious precipitancy, in the final action of that body, when the Constitution was put together as a whole. However, take it, with all its deficiencies, and it cannot be denied, that, it contains a full recognition of, and provision for every leading question of Governmental Reform, which has, for twenty years past, entered into the popular agitations; with the single exception of the representative basis. In regard to this great measure, I admit, the republican theory has not been adhered to; though, a nearer approximation thereto has been effected, than has ever, heretofore, been generally contended for, in the State at large. No one can doubt that, the future will remove this cause of complaint, as the past has already disposed of others, equally oppressive. Two features, alone, which I find in the Constitution, are sufficient to reconcile me to its imperfect mechanical construction; the denial of any power to the Legislature to interfere with the fundamental law; and, the periodical submission of this primal question of organic reform to the decision of the people only, at the ballot-box. Most of the inconveniences, complained of, will be temporary; as they are fully within the reach of legislation. Had the day, for putting the Constitution into effect, been postponed to a reasonable period after the close of this present session of the General Assem-