

been sovereign throughout the history of the government. They are sovereign to-day.

If the States are sovereign; if they are the parties to this great compact; if they are the framers of it; if they have made the law and the Constitution by which we have been guided throughout all our history does it not follow, as the shadow follows the substance, that if you make a power which is merely to act as the agent for the purpose of carrying out certain great objects, and if you delegate your sovereignty to that power, you make the creature above the creator? Is that consistent with the ordinary affairs of life, and the ordinary relations of men, and of systems of government? Is it consistent with the theory of Deity himself?

I contend that the sovereignty of the States remains in the people thereof respectively; and that when they entered into this great confederacy of States, when they formed this great Federal Government, for which I had and still have, under the Constitution, as great a reverence as any other man, it was so understood. In days gone by, and not many years past, standing upon the soil of the proud old State of Virginia, in one of their most ancient cities, I said to these people then, that if they dissolved this Union, not only would the judicial bench be thereby prostrated in the dust, but the besom of destruction would sweep over their whole political horizon, blotting out forever those brilliant stars which then studded the milky way of confederate liberty; that the voice of peace would be hushed amidst the clash of separate interests and discordant elements, and man's capacity of self-government would become the subject of idle mockery. It was no prophecy of mine. It was a doctrine which I had learned from every statesman from Maine to Georgia, that if you attempted to break down those great cardinal principles which underlie the government; if you abandon that Constitution which was the great shield and protector of the whole of the States; if you abandoned that great charter of liberty, and entered upon the wild field of speculation, you would produce a jarring of interests, and you would bring about a conflict between the States, which would finally bring about a dissolution of the Union.

I say that the very fact that the States stood so long together, is one of the strongest arguments to my mind, of the general recognition of the sovereign power of each State. I do not believe there was that in the character or the minds of the American people which would induce them to submit to tyranny in any shape or form. I believe that if they had supposed as many of them professed to suppose, that there were grievous and oppressive wrongs inflicted on them, they would have gone out of this Union long ago, at all hazards. But believing and knowing the sovereignty and the equality of the States, they

determined to appeal to reason and argument. They appealed to the feelings of men; to the sympathies and common bonds of the past; to the glories of the present, and to the brilliant prospects of the future career of this country, to induce them to stand by their constitutional rights. I say that it was the sovereign equality generally recognized as lying at the basis of the government that induced these men so long to live peaceably and quietly under what they conceived to be grievous oppression.

If you once admit the fact that sovereignty and equality will bind this government together; that the universal recognition of the sovereignty and equality of the States will bind it together forever, so far as any human foresight can see, is it not the bounden duty of every patriot in the land, if he could not see clearly that the adoption of the Constitution had so put it in the charter itself; if he could not by any reasonable argument say that it was there, to struggle to the utmost to have it put there. So far as we, in our individual capacity here in the State of Maryland, can do any thing towards the attainment of this great object, it ought to be done by this Convention; because if this is a sovereign Convention it alone can do anything that will be valid.

I say then that instead of putting in the bill of rights that we recognize paramount allegiance in the government of the United States, we should put in there what it was always intended should be in our bill of rights, and what was always intended should be the duty of every citizen whether in the bill of rights or not; and that is, that he owes obedience to the Constitution of the United States, and to the laws made in pursuance thereof. But to say that his allegiance is given up simply because he owes obedience, there is no more necessity for than there is where a man or a government appoints an agent. If this government, for example, appointed a minister to England or France, that man is the agent of the government, and has a right to do anything that his power of attorney gives him the power to do. But I hardly conceive that any one would suppose he had a right to act without any limitation or discretion outside of his power of attorney. He is bound down by the instrument giving him his authority, and must act by that.

So with the government of these United States. The distinct authorities which have been read here to-day, and read here for several days, and which have come down to us in ponderous volumes for years, show that the Government of the United States was formed by the people of the States, and not by the people of the United States in the aggregate. There is one fact alluded to to-day, that, it seems to me, ought to place the question beyond all doubt, if there were not argument upon argument piled already. It is