

that could not outlive the authority in which they originated.

Such is our opinion now—such was the thought of Maryland, when in the mist and doubt of the great struggle—while the destinies of the State were dependent upon the uncertain issue of a war, between veteran force and organized discipline on the one hand, and untrained masses on the other, still asserted this truth. Though she sheathed not the sword in the field, nor remitted of her efforts in the cause, she contended in the council against the rapacious spirit that then asserted a contingent exclusive right to the yet unsettled domain. This is a matter of history, and your committee would deem that they had discharged their duty in merely adverting to it as a link in the chain or reasons leading to the conclusion they report; but that the extraordinary position of the executive of the State, renders the inference possible, that these facts may not be of such general knowledge as they had conceived. By reference to the Senate Journals of Congress, from 1775 to 1788, it will be seen that by a portion of the ninth article of the proposed confederation, “no State should be deprived of territory for the benefit of the United States.” On the 21st May, 1779, the delegates from Maryland were instructed to refuse to sign the articles of confederation, unless the common property “in that country, unsettled at the commencement of this war, claimed by the British Crown, and ceded to it by the treaty of Paris,” was recognized by a modification of this article. She contended, that “if wrested from the common enemy by the blood and treasure of the thirteen States, it should be considered as a common property.” She charged those States as “ambitiously grasping at territory, to which, in her judgment, they had not the least shadow of exclusive right.”

Other states who had contended with Maryland for this modification, yielded to the exigence of the period, and signed the articles. Maryland alone, undaunted by her isolated position, unalarmed by the desertion of allies who had made common cause with her, “against the ambitious grasping at territory” of the larger states, strong in the patriotic and prophetic wisdom of those who then wielded her councils, remained firm to her principles. Congress, on the 6th of September, 1780, passed resolutions recommending the states to surrender “a liberal portion of their territorial claims” for the general benefit; and not until after the passage of this resolution, and the precedent cession from New-York, did she accede to the confederation.