

vote he had ever given in the Legislature, on the subject of the basis of representation. Now, if all the population of the State were represented here a very different state of things would exist. The gentleman from Kent did not approve of what was done in 1836 by the Legislature. He had stepped backward, as Mr Webster had once remarked. It was a fact that we were represented here worse than in any other State in the Union. There was no State represented upon so unequal a basis.

Mr. CHAMBERS appealed to the gentleman, as a matter of political history, whether the question of federal numbers was not decided without proper consideration and examination. The question never was properly settled.

Mr. BROWN. The question was settled on the basis of representation in 1836. It was a compromise all round, and he thought it was a very hard one. And the chairman of the committee—a distinguished member of the Baltimore bar—said that he, (Mr B.) was the most troublesome man on the committee.

Now, he was talking of great questions—the right of self-government. We came here, not to ask for half of our rights—for we had not one half given us, which nature and nature's God intended, but we came here to demand all that was due to us. Our opponents had got our rights; those that belonged to us; and they intended to keep them. We did not want their power, only our own, and when we asked for it we were met with all sorts of propositions, and they were not disposed to give us a fair basis of representation. But, he could not sit silent in his seat and hear these attacks, without making some remarks in reply.

Mr. STEWART, of Caroline, said :

That he would not now occupy the attention of the Convention, had not the motives of himself and colleagues, and those who had voted with them, been indirectly impugned. The gentleman from Baltimore city, [Mr. Brent,] had stated that he did not consider this proposition as half a loaf, but as a mere crumb. What the counties had agreed to yield up in a spirit of compromise, had been thrown back to them, it having been considered by the gentlemen from Baltimore city a mere crumb. He would say, notwithstanding, it had been asserted that there was nothing to compromise, that in his humble opinion there was much to compromise. Were they here to originate a government? Had they just sprung into existence? In the declaration of rights, it was declared, that man was born equal and that he was possessed of certain inalienable rights. He would enquire of those gentlemen who were opposed to the compromise suggested, if the counties had not a right to the representation which they had hitherto enjoyed? Had they obtained that representation wrongfully, by force or extortion? No. It was the birth-right of the people of the counties; they had obtained it by right, and that which they had obtained by right, it was useless to say they had no claim to enjoy.

When this government was first started, the

counties of the whole State were represented as by compact, they determined it was proper they should be. Their representation was guaranteed to them by the Constitution, in the adoption of which, the people of Baltimore, had participated; but the great difficulty which had arisen now, was, that the government had been in existence for more than half a century, there had sprung up in their midst a populous and prosperous city, which was fast gathering within its limits a population almost equal to half the rest of the State. This city now asked to be represented according to its population. The counties, as he had said, had not their power by wrong, but they possessed it by right, guaranteed to them by the existing Constitution.

The question now presented was, how much of their rights they should yield up for the benefit of the State at large, and for the benefit of Baltimore city in particular? The representatives of the smaller counties had offered what they considered a liberal and generous proposition, and it had been thrown back to them, with the reply, that it was a mere crumb—that it was no compromise—that the city had a right to representation according to population, and could ask nothing else, when it is known too, that nothing better will be offered. Now, he thought, there were two sides to the question. It could not be denied that they had a right to their present representation, and having this right, why should they yield it up? The argument had been advanced that representation according to population, was the true theory of government. No doubt of it, in the abstract. But it must be modified to suit the circumstances and condition of the people. Now, he would ask, if the smaller counties should yield up their right, what advantage would be gained by it either by Baltimore or the counties? Had Baltimore city ever been injured? Had the counties ever trampled upon it? Had the Legislature ever passed laws injurious to it? Had not that city grown to its present extent and did it not owe its present power, influence, population and wealth, to their present form of government? Could it have thus grown under wrong and oppression? The wealth of the counties was fast pouring into that city, and not only the wealth of the State, but the wealth of other States and other lands was fast accumulating there. In the view of her proud progress, he for one entertained no jealous feelings towards Baltimore. On the contrary he hoped they might yet see the time when that city would stand the first city in the Union. But while he took pride in the increase of Baltimore, and in its influence, he did not see why they should yield up their whole power to it, for he believed in a few years it would contain a majority of the inhabitants of the State of Maryland.

If the counties had always had it in their power to govern the city, and yet possessed the consciousness that they had exercised it, only to develop and strengthen her great resources, did not the city feel and know, that her interest, rights and prosperity, would forever be safe in their hands—that no injury would ever be imposed upon it?