

TO THE CITIZENS OF FREDERICK COUNTY.

It is proper that we should thank you for the mark of your confidence we have just received in our election to the State Convention: considering that neither of us have been members of the political party having so decided a preponderance in this county, nor otherwise enjoyed the means to become generally known to the people of the county, the result shews, not only a most gratifying trust in ourselves, but (what is far more important) a just appreciation of the issues involved, by a large majority of the people of our county.

We believe that, if no means had been taken to divert the public mind from the true issue, the triumph of patriotism would have been much more signal. It was absurd and insulting to regard this election as a question between any of the great political parties which have heretofore divided us. Each of these parties has been unquestionably patriotic, and either would properly resent the imputation of holding any doctrine hostile to the Union and Constitution of our country. No! this Convention has far higher and more important concerns to deal with than the rise and fall of political parties or their peculiar policy of government.

It is very true that the main source of our present troubles is to be found in an existing political party, apparently successful, though of very recent origin; but the evil springs from the attempt to bring into our party politics, elements which are destructive of our government itself.

From this attempt to extend party action beyond its legitimate sphere, by invoking

fanaticism and agrarianism, in the North, and disunionism in the South, we may take a useful lesson even in our county concerns. It is only by a perversion of party tactics, that so considerable a number of the citizens of our county are made to appear as favorable to "immediate secession" by Virginia. But for party drill, or misunderstanding, the voice of Frederick, on this occasion, would have been almost unanimous for preserving to the last the loyalty of Virginia to our national institutions. She did most to erect this great nation, and conduct it to its present high position. She yet has influence to correct disorders, before they become incurable diseases; and she will, we trust, be the last to abandon her own work, in despair.

The lesson we should learn is that hereafter, as members of political parties, we should see to it that the true voice of the party alone should direct and govern its action; that no great party should be under the dictation of a few who volunteer to direct it; and that to subordinate great interests to small, may be injurious not only to the country, but to the party itself.

Promising, fellow citizens, to exert our poor abilities to the utmost to effect the objects for which we are sent, and promote the honor and interests of our Commonwealth; and trusting that no trace of this election may remain in the forms of dissension or mutual distrust among ourselves, we again thank you for the honor you have conferred upon us.

JAMES MARSHALL,
ROBERT Y. CONRAD.

WINCHESTER, Feb. 5, 1861.