disgust, and the French minister reported to his Govern­ment—“ There is now in America no general government, —neither Congress, nor president, nor head of any one administrative department.” Everywhere there were symp­toms of a dissolution of the Union.

100. Congress was evidently incompetent to frame a new plan of national government ; its members were too dependent on their States, and would be recalled if they took part in framing anything stronger than the Articles. The idea of a convention of the States, independent of Congress, was in the minds and mouths of many ; Thomas Paine had suggested it as long ago as his *Common Sense* pamphlet : “ Let a continental conference be held, to frame a continental charter, drawing the line of business and jurisdiction between members of Congress and mem­bers of assembly.” To a people as fond of law and the forms of law as the Americans there was a difficulty in the way. The Articles had provided that no change should be made in them but by the assent of every State legislature. If the work of such a convention was to be subject to this rule, its success would be no greater than that of Congress ; if its plan was to be put into force on the ratification of less than the whole number of States, the step would be more or less revolutionary. In the end the latter course was taken, though not until every other expedient had failed ; but the act of taking it showed the underlying consciousness that union, independence, and nationality were now inextricably complicated, and that the thirteen had become one in some senses.

101. The country drifted into a convention by a round­about way. The navigation of Chesapeake Bay needed regulation ; and the States of Maryland and Virginia, having plenary power in the matter, appointed delegates to arrange such rules. The delegates met (1785) at Washing­ton’s house, Mount Vernon ; and Maryland, in adopting their report, proposed a meeting of commissioners from all the States to frame commercial regulations for the whole. Virginia acceded at once, and named Annapolis, in Mary­land, as the place. The convention met (1786), but only five States were represented, and their delegates adjourned, after recommending another convention at Philadelphia in May 1787.

102. Congress had failed in its last resort—a proposal that the States should grant it the impost power alone ; New York’s veto had put an end to this last hope. Con­fessing its helplessness, Congress approved the call for a second convention ; twelve of the States (all but Rhode Island) chose delegates ; and the convention met at Phil­adelphia (May 14, 1787), with an abler body of men than had been seen in Congress since the first two Continental Congresses. Among others, Virginia sent Washington, Madison, Edmund Randolph, George Mason (p. 789), and George Wythe; Pennsylvania Franklin, Robert and Gouverneur Morris, and James Wilson ; Massachusetts Rufus King, Gerry, and Strong ; Connecticut William S. Johnson, Sherman, and Ellsworth ; New York Hamilton; New Jersey Paterson; and South Carolina the two Pinck­neys (p. 790) and Rutledge.@@1 With hardly an exception the fifty-five delegates were clear-headed, moderate men, with positive views of their own, and firm purpose, but with a willingness to compromise.

@@@1 The following were some of the members of the convention not elsewhere noticed.—Oliver Ellsworth was bom at Windsor, Conn., April 29, 1745, and died at his birthplace Nov. 26, 1807. He graduated at Princeton College in 1766, became a lawyer, and judge of the superior court of his State, and in 1796 was appointed chief­justice of the United States Supreme Court. He was sent on a mission to France in 1799, and resigned his place as chief-justice in 1800.—Elbridge Gerry was born at Marblehead, Mass., July 17, 1744, and died at Washington, Nov. 23, 1814. He graduated at Harvard College in 1762, was a member of the Continental Congress, 1776-1780 and 1783-1785, and of the Congress under the constitu­tion, 1789-1793. He was elected vice-president by the Democratic party in 1812, and died in office.—Rufus King was bora at Scar­borough, Mass, (now Maine), March 24, 1755, and died at Jamaica,

1. Washington was chosen to preside, and the con­vention began the formation of a new constitution, instead of proposing changes in the old one. Two parties were formed at once. The Virginia delegates offered a plan, proposing a Congress of two houses, having power to legislate on national subjects, and to compel the States to fulfil their obligations. This is often spoken of as a “ national plan,” but very improperly. It was a “ large State ” plan, proposed by those States which had or hoped for a large population. It meant to base representation in both houses on population, so that the large States could control both of them, and it left the appointment of the president or other executive and the Federal judges to Congress,—so that the whole administration of the new government would fall under large-State control. On be­half of the “small States” Paterson of New Jersey brought in another plan. It continued the old Confederation, with its single house and equal State vote, but added the power to regulate commerce and raise a revenue, and to compel the States to obey requisitions. The State representation was fortunate. New Hampshire’s delegates did not attend until after those of New York (then classed as a small State) had retired from the convention in anger at its evi­dent drift towards the “ large-State ” plan. The large States had a general majority of six to five, but the constant dropping off of one or more votes, on minor features, from their side to that of the small States prevented the hasty adoption of any radical measures. Nevertheless, the final collision could not be evaded ; the basis of the two plans was in the question of one or two houses, of equal or pro­portionate State votes, of large-State supremacy or of State equality. In July the large States began to show a disposi­tion to force their plan through, and the small States began to threaten a concerted withdrawal from the convention.
2. The Connecticut delegates, from their first appear­ance in the convention, had favoured a compromise. They had been trained under the New England system, in which the assemblies were made up of two houses, one repre-

N.Y., April 29, 1827. He graduated at Harvard College in 1777, and served as a Massachusetts member of the Continental Congress from 1784 to 1786. Removing to New York, he was elected United States senator from that State, serving in 1789-96, and was minister to Great Britain from 1796 to 1803. From 1804 to 1812 he was the Federalist candidate for the vice-presidency.—Edmund Randolph was born in Virginia, Aug. 10, 1753, and died in Frederick county, Va., Sept. 12, 1813. He became a lawyer, and, though the son of a leading royalist, entered the American revolutionary army as Washington’s aide-de-camp. He served as governor of his State, and as attorney-general and secretary of state under Washington, re­signing in 1795 because of the discovery that he was in correspond­ence with the French minister.—John Rutledge was born at Charleston, S.C., in 1739, and died July 23, 1800. He studied law at the Temple (London), served in the Continental Congress, 1774, was governor of his State from 1779 to 1782, and afterwards was chief justice.—Roger Sherman was born at Newton, Mass., April 19, 1721, and died at New Haven, Conn., July 23, 1793. He was a shoemaker, who, removing to New Milford, Conn., studied law, and served as judge of a State court from 1765 to 1789, as member of the house of representatives from 1789 to 1791, and as United States senator from 1791 to 1793.—James Wilson was born near St Andrews, Scotland, about 1742, and died at Edenton, N.C., Aug. 28, 1798. Emigrating to the United States in 1766, he studied law, served in the Continental Congress (1775-78, 1782-83, and 1785- 87), and was one of the justices of the United States Supreme Court from 1789 until his death. Wilson’s reputation as an able lawyer has been growing of late, and hardly any member of the convention ranks higher than he for profound insight into the real nature of the govern­ment and constitution of the United States.—George Wythe was bom in Elizabeth county, Va., in 1726, and died at Richmond, Va., June 8, 1806. He was educated at William and Mary College, studied law, and was a member of the Virginia legislature from 1758, and of the Continental Congress in 1775. He was chancellor of his State from 1778 until 1798.