

county could be easily erected in accordance with the present law. Talbot, Caroline, and Wicomico, the counties contiguous to Dorchester are all less than 400 square miles in extent and could therefore yield nothing for a new county.

From these facts it would appear that if occasion demands additional counties—a somewhat remote possibility—it would be necessary to amend the Constitution as it now exists.

ELECTION DISTRICTS.

Each of the counties is divided into a series of election districts which in turn may be further subdivided into election precincts for the convenience of the voters. Prior to 1800 the entire population of the State was scarcely more than a quarter of a million and the voting population was much smaller. Moreover, the government of the State was such that voters had fewer questions presented to them than at present. There was apparently inconvenience for many voters in the exercise of their suffrage but the county was regarded a sufficiently small unit for electoral purposes. In 1798 a law⁴ was passed dividing the nineteen counties as they existed into election districts. Before this law could become effective it was necessary to pass an act of confirmation⁵ and subsequently commissions⁶ to subdivide the various counties were authorized. The counties and Baltimore City were divided as follows:

| | 1798. | 1906. | |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| | Election districts. | Election districts. | Precincts |
| Allegany | 6 | 28 | 42 |
| Anne Arundel | 5 | 7 | 16 |
| Baltimore City* | 8 | 24 | 317 |
| Baltimore County | 7 | 15 | 49 |
| Calvert | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Caroline | 3 | 8 | 9 |
| Carroll | — ⁷ | 13 | 21 |
| Cecil | 4 | 9 | 12 |
| Charles | 4 | 9 | 9 |
| Dorchester | 3 | 17 | 22 |
| Frederick | 7 | 26 | 38 |

⁴ Acts of 1798, Ch. 115. ⁵ Acts of 1799, Ch. 48. ⁶ Acts of 1799, Ch. 50.

⁷ Not created until 1836, included in Frederick and Baltimore counties.

* Separated from Baltimore county by Convention of 1850.