

the subject of "conventional reform" again into prominence.

As the evils of having a constitution so completely in the power of the legislature became apparent in the extravagant use of the State's credit, it was seen that there must be some effectual check to prevent the legislature in the future from involving the State in financial ruin. Each succeeding election found the subject of constitutional reform a topic of increasing excitement and agitation, and augmented the number of those who advocated the calling of a constitutional convention. The subject came regularly before the legislature, and the governors in their messages to the General Assembly repeatedly called the attention of that body to the necessity of calling a convention.

The most important alterations in the constitution contemplated were: a change in the system of representation in the House of Delegates; limitation upon the power of the General Assembly to contract debts, or pledge the public credit; reduction in governmental expenses; the right to elect all local county officers; a reform of the judicial system, and especially a constitutional convention, elected directly by the people for the express purpose of framing a new constitution.

The rapid growth of population in the northern and western sections of the State, especially in Baltimore City, rendered necessary the reapportioning of representatives in the General Assembly. The smaller counties of southern Maryland, and of the Eastern Shore, fearing the preponderance of Baltimore City's influence in the legislature, fixed an arbitrary and unjust limitation upon her representation. Although with a population including considerably over one-fourth of the entire population of the State, the representation of Baltimore City embraced only about one-sixteenth of the total representation in the House of Delegates.

Representation in Maryland from colonial days down to 1836 had been based upon territory. In the year 1659 the