

embarrassment of the most serious character, and requested that the whole discussion might be postponed until its agitation could exercise no injurious influence upon the credit of the State. That "conventional reform" would be a violation of the constitution, subversive of the interest of the smaller counties; and an abridgment to the rights of the minority.²⁰

In the gubernatorial canvass of 1847, the Democratic party nominated Philip Francis Thomas of Talbot county for governor. Mr. Thomas's opinion on the question of a constitutional convention was so well known that he was presented as the standard bearer of the "reform party," whose motto was "reform, retrenchment, and convention."²¹ The leaders of the reform movement entreated the people to lay aside all party prejudices and act independently of party affiliations in order to secure Mr. Thomas's election. They urged the counties to select their tickets for the General Assembly with direct reference to this question of "conventional reform," which had become paramount to all other questions. The Whigs, as a party opposed to the calling of a convention, nominated Mr. William Goldsborough for governor in opposition to Mr. Thomas. Active canvass of the State was made by both parties. Excitement ran high, and invectives were used to a considerable extent on both sides.

The Whigs characterized their opponents as "sycophants" and "parasites," "who pander to the prejudice and interest of the larger counties in hope of lucre."²² The Democrats returned the abuses with equally opprobrious terms. Mr. Thomas was elected governor by a majority of 709 votes; while the Whigs had the majority in both branches of the General Assembly. The friends of "conventional reform" were again destined to disappointment. The legislature refused to pass an act authorizing

²⁰ Report of Majority on Constitution, Dec. session, 1847.

²¹ Easton Star, July 27, 1847. ²² Easton Star, October 12, 1847.