

counties. Resolutions were adopted with the view of obtaining constitutional reform, and delegates were selected for the state reform convention.

In some of the county conventions there was a division of opinion as to whether the reforms in the constitution should be made by a convention; or by the legislature of the State. Generally the southern counties and those of the Eastern Shore were opposed to the convention. They considered a convention would be dangerous to their rights and privileges guaranteed in the constitution. The Democratic candidates for the legislature in Frederick county issued a card pledging themselves not only to vote for, but to use every honorable means to secure the passage of a bill in the legislature, providing for the call of a convention. They declared that "we hold that the 59th article of the constitution is not, and was not intended to be other than a restriction upon the legislature; and that the people cannot be curtailed of their sovereignty by constitutional provisions, nor by legislative enactments."²⁵

The delegates from the several county conventions, composing the state reform convention, assembled in Baltimore City, July 25, 1849. Represented were Washington, Frederick, Carroll, Baltimore, Harford, Caroline, Worcester, Somerset, Montgomery, Baltimore City and Howard District.²⁶ The convention was organized by selecting Col. John Pickell of Baltimore City president, and Beale H. Richardson, Esq., secretary. Two days were consumed in discussing the proposed reforms, and the methods most likely to bring the legislature to provide for a constitutional convention. On the second day the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted:

"*Whereas*, The people of Maryland, through their representatives from many of the counties, districts, and city of Baltimore, have called this convention together to declare

²⁵ Baltimore Sun, September 8, 1849.

²⁶ Baltimore American, July 26, 1849.