

decrease they considered that it would be only a few years until slavery would have entirely disappeared from the northern and western counties. They refused to compromise in any manner that would lessen their influence in the General Assembly.

The committee on representation consisted of nine members, representing Charles, Baltimore, Kent, Carroll, Talbot, Somerset, Washington, Anne Arundel counties and Baltimore City. The committee was unable to agree upon any plan of apportionment.

On the 11th of December, Mr. Merrick, of Charles county, chairman of the committee on representation made a negative report as follows:

(1) "*Resolved*, That it is expedient to regard federal numbers in finding the estimates and basis of representation in the House of Delegates."

(2) "*Resolved*, That it is inexpedient to adopt a principle of representation based exclusively upon popular numbers in organizing the House of Delegates or the Senate."<sup>11</sup>

Several of the members of the convention desired the whole subject of representation to be postponed until the convention had made further progress in making the constitution. They considered the question of representation was one to which more importance was attached than to any other upon which the convention would be called to act.

The delegates from Baltimore City consisting of Messrs. Presstman, Gwinn, Brent, Stewart, Sherwood, and Ware were opposed to referring the subject again to the committee in any form, and desired the whole subject of representation to be discussed in the convention as a whole, without the intervention of the committee. After several attempts to recommit, the whole subject was laid upon the table.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Debates, vol. i, p. 106. The term "federal numbers" meant the congressional ratio of 1 free to 3/5 slave population.

<sup>12</sup> Debates, vol. i, p. 137.