

tion humorously offered an amendment to the above by adding, "provided we can get any State to accept us."

This attempt of the Eastern Shore to secede from the Western Shore was not a new feature in the history of Maryland. The prevalence of shore jealousy was very strong in the convention which framed the constitution of 1776. A proposition was then made in that convention to insert an article in the Declaration of Rights, acknowledging the right of either shore to separate from the other whenever their interest and happiness so required. This proposition in the convention of 1776 received the support of sixteen out of the twenty-one members from the Eastern Shore.¹⁵

The amendment offered by Mr. Hicks was lost by a vote of fifty-one to twenty-seven.¹⁶ It received the support of fifteen out of the twenty-seven votes cast from the Eastern Shore. The counties of Dorchester and Worcester voted unanimously for secession. Queen Anne's county cast a solid vote against it, and the other counties of the Eastern Shore were divided in their vote.¹⁷ Mr. Hicks made a second unsuccessful attempt to have his amendment adopted when the convention was considering future amendments.¹⁸

It was the deep interest in the maintenance of slavery in the southern counties of both shores that caused those sections of the State to view with alarm the demands of Baltimore City and western Maryland for representation based on population.

A provision was placed in the constitution intended to remove the apprehensions of the southern counties in regard to the protection of slave property, by prohibiting

¹⁵ McMahan's History of Md., p. 466.

¹⁶ Debates, vol. i, p. 156.

¹⁷ Mr. Hicks, a number of years later, declared that he had introduced the resolutions, not to declare an "inherent right," but to give the people an opportunity to vote on the question. [See Radcliffe: Governor Hicks of Maryland and the Civil War, p. 13, note.]

¹⁸ Debates, vol. ii, p. 851.