

public debt. It was also claimed that the appointive power was abused and that the governor and Senate were influenced more by political considerations than by public interest.

The majority of the committee on the judicial department, Mr. Bowie, of Prince George's county, chairman, submitted a report providing for an elective judiciary. The term of office was to be ten years, and the judges re-eligible. The State was to be divided into three judicial districts; one on the Eastern and two on the Western Shore. The report also provided for the election by popular vote of all clerks, registers of will, justices of the peace, etc.³¹ All of these officers heretofore were appointed by the governor.

Mr. Bowie, in presenting the report of the majority said that in his judgment, the reform in the judicial system of the State was the most important question that could be submitted to the convention. He claimed that southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore would have never consented to the calling of that convention, save for the reform desired in the judiciary, and for the reduction in governmental expenses.³²

On the 18th of March, Mr. Crisfield, of Somerset county, one of the most distinguished lawyers of the State, from the minority of the same committee, submitted a report, providing for an appointive judiciary; with a tenure for good behavior. The State was to be divided into eight judicial districts. The estimate of the probable cost was placed at sixty-three thousand dollars per annum. Twenty-nine thousand dollars more than the estimate of the majority's report.³³

The contest in the judicial organization was over an elective and an appointive judiciary. Public sentiment in the State was strongly in favor of the former, though some

³¹ Debates, vol. i, p. 239.

³² Debates, vol. ii, p. 460.

³³ Debates, vol. i, p. 516-519.