

been urged many times in the legislature, during the reform agitation, and was referred to in the convention. Mr. Dashiell's view of the government of Maryland was that of a confederation of counties: each county being a separate and distinct community. He did not regard the counties as sovereignties, because the State herself had scarcely a principle of sovereignty left after the formation of the Federal Government.

The basis of this view of the political individuality of the counties was an historical one. In the convention of 1776, which framed the original constitution of the State, the counties were represented equally. In that convention the voting was by counties; and not by individuals, except in certain cases, and on the final adoption of the constitution.⁴² In the convention of 1776 Baltimore town, and Annapolis city were recognized as boroughs; and a representation of only one-half of that allowed to a county was conceded to them. The resolution in determining the representation of Baltimore town and Annapolis says, "Nor shall the resolution be understood to engage or secure such representation to Annapolis or Baltimore town, but temporarily; the same being, in the opinion of this convention, properly to be modified, or taken away, on a material alteration of circumstances of those places, from either a depopulation or a considerable decrease of the inhabitants thereof."⁴³

From these facts Mr. Dashiell argued that the right was reserved to take away the representation of Annapolis and Baltimore, under certain circumstances; but no such right was given, reserved, or acknowledged to have the like effect upon the counties under any circumstances whatever. The right to political existence and equal representation was reserved to each county, and whenever this equal representation was to be changed, modified or abol-

⁴² See Proceedings of Convention, June 25, 1774.

⁴³ Proceedings of Convention, July 3, 1776.