

existing government of the source of power in the State.

The amendment of Mr. Presstman was taken from the Declaration of Rights of the State of Texas, and appears in the constitution or Declaration of Rights of several of the states.⁴⁷

It was at this time that Mr. Hicks moved his amendment to the Declaration of Rights, which provided for the right of any portion of the State to secede from the other.⁴⁸ The amendment of Mr. Presstman was amended so as to give the majority of the voters the right of changing the constitution, but in a legal manner, and was adopted.⁴⁹

The 9th section of the report of the committee on the legislative department declared that, "No priest, clergyman, or teacher of any religious persuasions, society or sect, and no person holding any civil office of profit under this State, except justices of the peace, should be capable of having a seat in the General Assembly."

The Rev. Mr. Chandler, of Baltimore county, the only clergyman in the convention, made a vigorous attempt to abolish the first section of the clause, which he regarded as entirely unnecessary and unjust. In defence of his motion to "strike out" Mr. Chandler said that, "Equal rights and privileges to all" was a principle advocated by the members of the convention, yet the same gentlemen calmly unite their strength to blot from political existence a numerous and influential class of citizens as wholly unworthy of all confidence and even dangerous to the community. "What great offence" he asked, "what crime have this class of citizens committed, that they should be deprived of one of the dearest privileges of American-born citizens—that of eligibility to office? Have they committed treason? Have they been guilty of highway robbery? Are they

⁴⁷ Maine, Dec. of Rights, 2d sec., 1820; Massachusetts, Preamble to Constitution, 1780; Vermont, Dec. of Rights, art. vii. 1793; Connecticut, Constitution, art. i, 1818; Virginia, Dec. of Rights, 2d sec., 1820; Indiana, Constitution, art i, 2d sec., 1816.

⁴⁸ See ch. ii, p. 43.

⁴⁹ Debates, vol. i, p. 186.