

## CHAPTER III

### THE CONSTITUTION

The constitution was submitted to the voters of the State, June 4, 1851, and was ratified by a majority of 10,409 votes.<sup>1</sup> The eight counties of the Eastern Shore gave a majority of 1337 for the new constitution. The counties of Anne Arundel, Charles, Calvert, Kent, Montgomery, Prince George's, Somerset and St. Mary's voted against its adoption.

The constitution pleased no one; but to many it was an improvement on the old one, "a thing of shreds and patches." Of the sixty articles of which the original constitution consisted, twenty-five had been abrogated and twenty had been so amended as to have retained little of their original form. Altogether there had been sixty-six amendments made.

Only twenty-two days intervened between the adjournment of the convention and the ratification of the constitution. During this time the friends and opponents of the new constitution kept constantly before the public its merits and defects.

It has been stated that the people of the State adopted the constitution of 1851 without a full knowledge of its provisions. This statement appears to be entirely unfounded. The text of the constitution was published in the daily and weekly presses of the State. It was also published in pamphlet form. Furthermore it was translated into German, and published in the daily *Deutsche Correspondent*, a paper having quite a reputation in its activity for promulgating the public documents and laws among the large number of Germans in the State.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Baltimore Sun, May 22, 1851.