

(excluding the salaries of the clerks, etc., etc.), while Massachusetts, with a population more than twice as great, and almost three times the extent of territory, was paying but \$25,750. The committee recommended the reduction of the number of judges; but not of their salaries.

In addition to the lack of authority claimed by the legislature, the fear of agitating the question of slavery in the State greatly increased the difficulties of securing legislative sanction for the call of a constitutional convention. That portion of the State which was deeply interested in slavery, jealously guarded that institution from both internal and external interference. It was feared that, if a convention assembled, with full power of framing a new constitution, the relation between master and slave might be changed. By an amendment of 1836, a provision was engrafted upon the constitution, declaring that the relation of master and slave in the State should not be abolished unless a bill for that purpose should pass by a unanimous vote of both branches of the General Assembly, be published three months before a new election, and be unanimously confirmed by both branches of the succeeding General Assembly after a new election. In event of slavery being abolished within the State, the constitution required full compensation to be made to the master for the value of his slaves.<sup>16</sup>

The dissension between the North and South arising over the settlement of the slavery question in the new territories acquired by the Mexican War, and the position of Maryland as a border State, rendered the southern counties more determined than ever to place around the institution of slavery those safeguards which should render it more secure from both internal and external violence. They considered that security could best be assured when they had a controlling voice in the government of the State. This predominant influence in the General Assembly they

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<sup>16</sup> Act 1836, ch. 197, sec. 26.