

a vote of the people to be taken upon the subject of a constitutional convention, claiming lack of authority and power to enable them to do so.

These repeated refusals of the legislature to call a convention; or to take the vote of the people in reference to its call, made the reform party more determined than ever to secure a convention with, or without, the aid of the legislature. Accordingly the leaders of the reform party throughout the State began early in the spring of 1849 a more violent agitation than ever on this all-absorbing question of "conventional reform." Local conventions were held in several counties, and delegates were selected to meet in a state reform convention to be held in the city of Baltimore. One of the first of these county conventions was held in Westminster, on the 9th of June. In this gathering addresses were made by several prominent men of the county, earnestly recommending prompt and judicious action with a view to a thorough reform in the constitution of the State by a convention. Among the defects of the constitution comprised in the resolutions adopted were: its liability to be changed at the caprice of the legislature; the inequality of representation in the Senate; the life tenure of the judiciary; the lack of constitutional check upon the legislature in the expenditures of the public money, and as a grievance, that the legislature had failed to meet the wishes of the people in granting constitutional reform.²³

The Worcester county reform convention met at Snow Hill on the 10th of July. The complaints made against the government of the State in the convention were, excessive taxes, both direct and indirect, and no constitutional check placed upon the legislature in the expenditure of public money. The convention selected ten delegates to attend the state reform convention to be held in Baltimore city.²⁴ Similar conventions were held in several

²³ Westminster Democrat, June 11, 1849.

²⁴ Baltimore Sun, July 16, 1849.