

would be imposed upon the General Assembly, by reason of the necessity of enacting laws to carry out the provisions of the new constitution. They claimed that biennial sessions were anti-democratic in their tendency; and were an indirect and open violation of the spirit of the clause in the Declaration of Rights which declared that elections ought to be free and *frequent*. As a proof that annual sessions were necessary they referred to the states of New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and other states, which had annual sessions. They claimed that the relation which cities bear to the rest of the State, because of the great concentration of population and capital in the cities, rendered annual sessions of the legislature absolutely necessary for the preservation of the equilibrium between the diversified interests. The convention finally agreed to annual sessions for three years; thereafter the sessions of the legislature were to be biennial.

The committee on the Declaration of Rights, Mr. Dorsey, of Anne Arundel county, chairman, submitted their report on the 11th of January, which was taken up by the convention for discussion on the 28th.<sup>40</sup> As reported by the committee the preamble to the Declaration of Rights read as follows: "We, the Delegates of Maryland, in convention assembled, taking into our most serious consideration the best means of establishing a good constitution in this State, declare," etc. The words of the preamble were substantially the same as those adopted in 1776.

Mr. Dashiell, of Somerset county, moved to amend the preamble by inserting after the word "Maryland" the words "representing the counties, and city of Baltimore."<sup>41</sup> The object of the amendment was to assert the theory that the counties and the city of Baltimore were parties to the compact in their municipal capacities.

This theory of political individuality of the counties had

---

<sup>40</sup> Debates, vol. i, p. 140.

<sup>41</sup> Debates, vol. i, p. 235.