

Mr. Hicks had made an effort, the day before, to obtain the floor, but was unsuccessful, and had he then succeeded would have occupied the Convention somewhat longer than he now designed to do. He rose now only from a stern sense of duty, to add a word if possible to what had already been said and so well said in favor of the proposition now under consideration; nor would he attempt it, at this late stage of the discussion of this substitute, did he not consider it to be one of the most important subjects, connected with our doings here. Important first as a tax-saving measure. *But infinitely more important as a measure*—the failure of which, would, in his opinion, contribute more to jeopard the Constitution which we are now striving to prepare for submission to the people of our agitated State, than anything we may do here. And he now raised the voice of warning, though feeble, and trusted gentlemen upon this floor would reflect well upon this subject and act prudently. He should have contented himself with the able vindication by his colleague of his important measure, together with the valuable aid it received by the able and distinguished members from Frederick and Washington counties yesterday, and by others to-day. But coming from a section of the State where this measure of biennial sessions has been earnestly called for and are very popular, he desired to bear his testimony to that fact, and confirm, if not strengthen, what his colleague had said in that connexion. *We are engaged, he spoke of the people of the Eastern Shore*—we are engaged, in helping, at least, to pay a debt for which we have never received value; therefore desire to get through as quick as possible and forget it. He voted for biennial sessions, and so did his people of *all parties*, when submitted to the people, four years ago—and unlike the gentleman from Howard District, he intended to vote for it again. The gentleman from Howard District and his friend from Frederick, (Mr. BISER,) seemed to think they have discovered their folly and are retracing their steps, but he had begun right and intended to keep right. Gentlemen speak of annual sessions of the Legislature as a subject not to be considered by the Convention in connexion with that of expense. Are we not here to make an organic law, to last, he trusted, for ages to come; and are we not to guard all the interests of the people as best we can? He thought; he felt so; but how do some gentlemen propose to do it? Why, sir, by the multiplication of officers, and largely increased salaries. The gentleman from Frederick, (he meant his friend, Mr. BISER,) says he voted for biennial sessions too; and why? Because, he says, the cry of repudiation was then to be heard in our State. So it was; and my word for it, Mr. President, if we choke the wholesome financial measures which have been so wisely concocted and now in successful operation, you will hear it again, for although we are comparatively quiet now, it is not to be forgotten, that we have a debt of sixteen millions of dollars hanging over us, and which, enormous as it is, we intend to pay, if let alone as we now are. The same gentleman (Mr. BISER) has told us that nothing was said during the canvass last summer by

the people of Frederick, upon the subject of biennial sessions. Certainly not; and why? Obviously, because they *there*, as everywhere else, considered it a fixed subject, settled by them, and never, as they supposed, to be disturbed again. Had not the people decided this subject of biennial sessions unequivocally, and shall this Convention thus trifle with them? He hoped not. Have your elections once in two years, and your sessions of the Legislature in like manner, and then you save money and morals. He felt that it was most desirable to avoid frequent elections, for all knew as well he does, the demoralizing effect of popular elections; and he thought all ought, with him, go for just so many elections as were really necessary and no more. The people desired repose and relief from the continual excitement of elections, and for himself, he felt a great anxiety on account of the too frequent elections, for the reason that they are demoralizing in their tendency; and therefore he desired to have the popular elections of the State less frequent for the two-fold reason of immorality and expense. As to the argument founded on the necessity for a strict supervision of the Treasury, he would say, that so long as we have officers faithful as now, and in the past, there is no need of such frequent supervision.

We come here, professing to take charge of the public interest, and how do we do it? Why, by multiplying offices and increasing salaries—the last thing the people expect us to do. The people who have so unequivocally decided in favor of biennial sessions, have not sent us here to change the system, rely on it.

Why, gentlemen talk as though we had come here to repeal our entire statutory system. What have we to do with the statutes? Our duty is to frame an organic law, in conformity with our laws already made, and to which all laws, hereafter to be made, must conform. We are not here to prepare a statutory code. If we insert in this Constitution, propositions at variance with the expressed sense of our people, we do not do our duty. He hoped we shall be able to form such a Constitution as will be acceptable to our people. As to his own votes, he would only say, they shall be honestly cast. He had repeatedly served in the Legislature too, but was ready to admit that his friend from Carroll, (Mr. Brown,) had been in more legislative bodies and had belonged to more parties than he had, and should not controvert what he had said in connexion with the industry of the last Legislature; but he must say, that he knew, as had been said in many instances, that weeks of the earlier parts of the sessions were consumed in idleness or pleasure. Some time must be used in electing officers and the other processes of organization, but no one having experience, doubts that much time is lost in amusements on such occasions. If we can send out to the people, such a Constitution as we may reasonably expect them to adopt, we must be careful what the provisions are which we insert in it.

His friend from Frederick, (Mr. Biser,) had said that the cry of repudiation was once heard in Maryland, and that he had then voted for biennial