

Mr. BISEK said, that if he was called on to vote on this question, he should be compelled to vote against the proposition of the gentleman from Queen Anne's. He referred to the speech of the gentleman from Queen Anne's on Saturday in favor of this very amendment, which he is now disposed to defeat. That cogent argument of the gentleman from Queen Anne's still rung in his ears. He had not heard it answered, and unless the gentleman himself would answer it, he could not now consent to change his course.

Mr. SPENCER reminded the House that in some remarks he made on Saturday, he had expressly declared that he was in favor of biennial sessions. He had then stated that he would prefer a provision for three annual sessions to enable the Legislature to pass the laws necessary to carry out the requisitions of the new Constitution. But as he could not effect that object, he had no course left him but to move the amendment providing that the question shall be submitted to the people.

Mr. BISEK said the gentleman from Queen Anne had also stated that he was in favor of biennial sessions, because the people had decided in favor of them; but that other gentlemen thought that public sentiment was now opposed to them; and the gentleman from Queen Anne had asked if there was any gentleman who would be unwilling to submit the question again to the decision of the people?

Mr. THOMAS apologized for rising to trouble the House with any remarks, but as he had been requested by the gentleman from Dorchester, not now in his seat, to look after this question, and as he felt something was due to his colleague who was necessarily absent, he trusted he should be permitted to say a very few words. He regretted that he should have been brought before the House so much more frequently by these circumstances than was agreeable to himself. He desired now to ask a question of the gentleman from Queen Anne for his own information. If he understood the present proposition offered by that gentleman, it seemed to him to conflict both with the views of that gentleman as it did with his own. He had no objection to make to the clause as to the time of the meeting of the two first sessions of the Legislature. But he understood the gentleman from Queen Anne as proposing to strike out the sixth section, which fixes a limitation of the duration of the subsequent sessions, which he did not think was in accordance with the disposition of the House.

He was willing to vote to make it imperative on the Legislature to hold two annual sessions, by way of holding out the olive branch, and he would advise all the friends of reform to take this course. This would be equivalent to the bill as it now stands, which gives to the Legislature the power (which he believed the Legislature would exercise) to sit twice in the first two years. And if he understood this amendment it limits as the bill before us limits, the third session to the 10th of March. We shall then retain the important provision for biennial sessions, commencing with the year 1854. It should be borne in mind that there are propositions to be made, looking to a

codification of our laws, to a reform in the practice and of special pleading, and to such other changes as will make the proceedings in our Courts analogous to the practice of the Courts of Law in some of the other States of the Union. If we expect the Legislature to do this work, there will be business much beyond the ordinary business which comes before the Legislature, for its action. Some of the best practitioners of law in our State may probably be willing to come to the Legislature to be engaged in this employment which will require great practical knowledge. Now if you subject lawyers of this character to the drudgery of two elections, which must be the case, unless under one election they may attend two sessions, he would put it to gentlemen on this floor, who are entirely competent to give him an answer, whether these gentlemen could be induced to canvass their counties twice over? They might be willing to make sacrifices to be elected once to the General Assembly to assist in reforming our Laws. The first business of the Legislature would be to lay off the new Congressional Districts in the State, under the new apportionment made by Congress under the new census by which this State will lose one representative in that body. They may then proceed to take up the subject of the revision of our laws, with a view to their codification. Before this can be completed, they may adjourn from 1852 to 1853, when they will find it necessary to resume the work for the purpose of completing it. But should it be required by the Constitution that a new election shall intervene between these sessions, half of those gentlemen who had commenced the work might be left at home, the whole task would be recommenced and gone over again. He hoped, therefore, that the friends of reform would accept of the proposition now offered, and thus secure one important article in the Constitution.

Mr. SCHLEY said the argument in favor of annual sessions had been made on the ground that a greater amount of labor than usual would be imposed on the General Assembly, for the purpose of enacting the laws necessary to carry out the provisions of the new Constitution. He thought this was a mistake. He was anxious that there should be a codification of the laws of the State, and the only way in which he thought it ought to be done, would be for the Legislature to appoint Commissioners to examine and codify them. This would be a work requiring much time; it will not be done in 1852 or 1853, and probably not even in 1854. It is not possible for a task of this magnitude to be completed by the first meeting of the Legislature. It is very desirable that some change should be made in the practice, in relation to special pleading. The great objection to the present mode of special pleading is not, as is generally supposed, that it is too special. Let it be stripped of its verbosity, and its antiquated forms, and that may be all which may be found necessary. The only effect of any laborious effort at change, may be to make what is already special, still more special. Apart from these two objects, what other business is there which requires that there shall be annual sessions of the Legislature? The mere laying off