

his far-seeing judgment, and likely to consummate the object proposed, and we would adhere to that policy, and that system of taxation until the last dollar is paid. I would hold to the present financial system of the State, until it has worked out its high destiny, of restoring the people of old Maryland once more, to that proud position they once occupied. Aye, more; I would engraft upon this Constitution a guaranty that those taxes shall be returned to the people, when the public works become remunerative, according to the mode prescribed by my amendment. Shall we neglect this amendment, and deceive the reasonable expectation of the people? Continue to sport their confidence? Ever allure them by a course of duplicity into hopes never to be realized? I trust this is not the determination of this Convention, but that we shall evince our sincerity and good faith towards the people of this deeply indebted State, by engrafting this section upon the Constitution, to be submitted to their judgment.

Mr. DONALDSON called for a division of the question;

Which was ordered.

Mr. SOLLERS rose to enquire of the gentleman from Worcester, (Mr. Jacobs,) what the meaning of this provision was? As he, (Mr. S.,) understood it, the tax-laws were not to be repealed until a sufficient fund should have been provided to extinguish the debt. Who was to be the judge of that sufficiency?

Mr. JACOBS said: The legislature, I presume.

Mr. SOLLERS continued. It seemed then, he said, to be unnecessary. If it was not intended to bind the legislature against passing any law to repeal the taxes, for what purpose had it been offered? Was it done to gratify bond holders? He could not think so. He did not believe that any gentleman representing an agricultural district, would introduce any proposition, prejudicial to the interests of his own constituents, or calculated to promote the interests of bond-holders and stock-jobbers.

What then was the object of this proposition? Was it intended as a mere expression of opinion on the part of this Convention that we did not intend to repudiate? Why, who dreamed of such a thing? That day—the darkest in our history—when “the heavens were hung with black”—had long since passed. And no man at this hour would stand up and advocate any thing like the doctrine of repudiation. He could not understand the purpose for which the proposition had been offered.

If it meant that the legislature was to pass no law to repeal the tax-laws, notwithstanding that there might be a large surplus annually flowing into the treasury, then he was opposed to it. He would not, he dare not go before a down-trodden constituency, and tell them that although there was a large accumulation of money in the treasury, wrung from their hard toil and the sweat of their brows, yet the organic law forbid us relieving them from a burthen which was crushing them. Gentlemen of the counties, (asked Mr. S.,) can you do this?

He spoke of the peculiar position of himself

and of the people whom he represented, to whose benefit these gigantic works had in no degree contributed. Yet they were paying for them annually more than they were able to pay—and now a demand was made for a constitutional provision prohibiting the Legislature from repealing the tax-laws although some of the burthens they imposed might well be taken off.

It was not often that the gentleman from Kent, (Mr. Chambers,) found it necessary to resort to *ad captandum* arguments. But there certainly was some savour of such an argument in the remarks which the gentleman made the other day, when he appealed to the farmers here and told them that the last taxes to be taken off would be the taxes on the land. He, (Mr. S.,) declared that the very first bill which reduced the taxes would take off some five or ten cents from the land tax. The very same influences which were brought to bear for the establishment of the system which the gentleman from Baltimore city, (Mr. Pressman,) had yesterday designated the auxiliary taxes, would again operate to continue them whilst the necessity for taxes existed—and these were the very last which the farmers would consent to repeal.

We were told that this was a solemn pledge to the people of Maryland and to the world, that under no circumstances should the tax laws be repealed, and that the faith of the State should be maintained inviolate. No man was more disposed to maintain the faith of the State than he was. But where in the history of the world had a system of finance been found so perfect, that it was not susceptible of improvement? There were certain gentlemen who seemed to take into their own peculiar keeping the faith and credit of the State—to regard it as exclusively the work of their own hands, and to consider it almost a sacrilegious act for any man to touch it. Gentlemen must pardon him. But he knew of no work of mere human wisdom which, in the change of time and circumstances, might not require to be changed. And was he to be told that, although there might be surplus millions in the Treasury, they were not to be touched, and that the enormous taxes now weighing heavily upon the people were to be continued, even when they could safely and properly be relaxed? He, for one, could not go home and teach such a doctrine to a constituency who had so honestly and so freely paid the taxes which the State, in the hour of her need and her peril, had imposed upon her.

Mr. GWINN said, that he was opposed to the first branch of the proposition offered by the gentleman. He could not see the wisdom of keeping up the present system of taxation, until the whole public debt was paid off. Under the estimates of the Treasurer, the sinking fund would absorb it in about fifteen years. But what need was there for the continuance of the present system in all its parts, in order that this result might be accomplished in so brief a time. Taxation was, indeed, designed to meet the current interest, and to provide for the payment of the principal of our obligations. But it was surely only right that this burthen should be as equally distributed,