

Convention should will on this subject must, of course, meet with acquiescence on the part of the minority. He would now ask if it was the settled purpose on the part of the majority that the new constitution was to commence its operation, by the election of officers, prior to the next meeting of the Legislature? The bill under consideration provided for the election of Senators in the ensuing fall. He had supposed it would be absolutely necessary that the Legislature should enact various details, necessary to the accomplishment of the objects of the constitution, before it could get into operation. If, however, this was not the sense of the Convention—and he felt no disposition to make converts to his opinion—let it be so understood, and let us not act with our eyes closed to the fact, that we are putting an end to the term of Senators who have been elected by the people since we ourselves were elected.

If it be decided that the constitution was not to go into operation until after a session of the Legislature, then some measure must be adopted to delay the election of Senators until after that period. We must adopt one theory or the other, and make our action conform to it throughout.

Mr. DONALDSON said, he had a further suggestion to make. By this section it was proposed that the whole Senate should be elected anew next fall. Now one-third of the present Senators were elected last fall for the term of six years, and they had never even taken their seats; another third had four years, and the remainder had nearly two years yet to serve. He desired to know whether it was the intention of gentlemen here, that these three classes should all be swept out together by the adoption of the new constitution. He had hoped that some amendment would have been prepared, providing for an equitable arrangement of the whole matter; he had none himself, because he always preferred to withhold his own suggestions and to adopt the plans of others, if any were offered which at all approached a coincidence with his views and wishes. Such an arrangement surely would not be difficult to make, if the majority were disposed to take up the matter in an equitable spirit.

He took this occasion to state, that it had not been his desire to shorten the term of the present Governor, and that by voting in favor of fixing the elections for that officer in 1852 and 1856, his only object had been to make the terms expire in the even years. Such an arrangement was at that very time on foot, as was soon afterwards offered by the gentleman of Prince George's, (Mr. Sprigg,) for continuing the present Governor for the full length of his term. But as it did not seem proper that the Governor elected in October last should have his term shortened, neither was it proper that all these Senators should be at once swept from their places, some of whom had just been elected for the period of six years under the old constitution. This is what he had intended to suggest to his friend from Kent, (Mr. Chambers,) but that gentleman had misunderstood him.

Mr. GWINN said he believed it was the practice of other States, in conventions of this character, to prepare some schedule in which provision was made for setting the machinery of the new Constitution in motion. The Senatorial elections could be provided for in it. He could not agree with the gentleman from Queen Anne's, (Mr. Grason,) that the newly-elected Senators should be entitled to their full term. He saw no reason why a new election should not be had. It would not work injustice to the counties—because, if each was entitled to a Senator—the new choice would work no disadvantage. Besides, it was not right to retain the old Senators, more than the old judges. The system should be a unit. It was for the benefit of the whole people, not only those now living, but of those who were to succeed them; and the adjustment should be made, not with a view to the convenience of those holding political trusts under the old constitution, but with an eye single to the permanent good of the people of the State.

Mr. THOMAS observed, that he would be glad to have some specific motion made on this subject, in respect to the newly-elected Senators; but, as the question had been mooted, he thought it was necessary to respond to it. There was no difficulty in his county; his partner in the practice of the law, and a gentleman with whom he was most intimate, was a Senator elect, but had not taken his seat, and did not expect to do it, and he (Mr. T.) knew that that was the expectation of those who elected him. There was this difficulty in permitting the old Senators to take their seats under the new Constitution. There was a difference in the new from the old Senators as to the term of service, and this Convention ought not to make a change in this term of service—he would make a change to suit purposes of any character. He was free to give utterance to his wishes on this occasion on another account: he was one of the members of this body who were disposed to give effect to the new Constitution as early as convenient. So far as it affected offices, the tenure of which was changed, he was for re-electing them, and would not vote to give to them a tenure different from that the people expected they would have at the time of their election. Having this purpose to give effect to all the branches of the Government at as early a day as possible, he could not make an exception in favor of a personal friend.

Mr. JENIFER would ask the gentleman, (Mr. ———), how it was that the Governor and Senators being elected by the people on the same day, a distinction should be made? Now, this distinction appeared to him to be without reason. He was opposed to abridging the term of service for which the present Governor was elected—and he saw no good cause why the present Senators, who were elected on the same day with the Governor, should not be entitled to their seats as Senators, instead of being sent back for a new election.

They, like the Governor, had been elected after the Convention had been called, and with