

for if they are qualified to take a man from society and make him a judge, they certainly will be less obnoxious to any objection urged originally, for they will be less apt to commit errors in re-electing him, having ascertained whether he is qualified to hold the position of Judge by actual experiment.

Mr. HICKS said, I do not intend to consume the time of this body, as I trust we are now approaching rapidly to the close of our important labors; but as the author of the proposition now pending, which I conceive would be a very important addition to this section, I feel that I am bound to perform, as best I can, the responsibility which I consider devolves upon me as a friend of this measure. I think I should have forbore even to have added a single remark to those heretofore submitted by me, but for a remark or two which fell from the gentleman from Baltimore city. (Mr. Brent.) He emphatically said that all these efforts to obtain the best lawyers in our bar as the judiciary of the State was a want of confidence in the people—that we were unwilling to trust the people. I speak alone for myself, and I say to my friend it is not so with me. I have entire confidence in the people, if they are let alone; but I cannot say that I have the same amount of confidence in agitators that I have in the people. I have long been convinced that if the people were let alone, undisturbed by party agents, they will invariably come to right conclusions.

Mr. BRENT, of Baltimore city. I understand the gentleman to say that he has entire confidence in the people. Does the gentleman believe that they can be duped by agitators?

Mr. HICKS. I believe they can be misled, and I believe that they have been misled, and no man in his right senses can doubt it. I have lived too long myself to be duped quite so easily as some others. If certain persons wish to secure offices, they must multiply them. If it takes agitation to get up a feeling to enable a portion of the people of the State of Maryland or any other State, to provide offices or places, it must be done. When you talk of the people, I desire it to be understood that I am emphatically one of the people. I said, in my place, a few days since, that I have not connected with my family a member of the legal profession. Then I cannot be charged with advocating the creation of new offices and the increasing of salaries, with a view to benefit myself or those connected with me, by birth or personally, as judgeships will not be in the way, I feel that I am here untrammelled. But I will not stand here and hear it charged that we want confidence in the people, that we are not willing to trust the people, to whom I, for one, am proud to belong. I never intend to do this. I look to the safety of the people. It has been my lot, in a very humble way, long to mingle in the deliberations of bodies somewhat similar to this, and I begin to think we have entirely misunderstood the object for which we were called together; that in place of coming here to make a constitution, we have come here to legislate.

I have but one design in this particular, and that is to provide by our action here, a safe, pure and independent judiciary for the people of this State; for upon this I consider their entire interests depend. To this I look with an amount of interest that outstrips all other interests connected with our doings, and if I stand alone in my votes, I shall be proud for them to see and know that I have done my duty in this particular. What is the character of your courts of law? Every thing has been done to gratify the people. They do not care about it, so that their persons, property and lives are taken care of. All they desire is that justice shall be well administered. They having very little interest in it or bar judges, looking only to evenhanded justice. Your courts of justice now have scarcely the amount of dignity which forty or fifty years ago was thrown around a single justice of the peace, sitting at a cross road. And why? Because of this eternal clamor, made by demagogues, by men looking to promotion, and who say you must not do this, you must not do that, it is not very popular. I think such a thing will have the effect to make such a man judge, such a man attorney, such a man register. It gives us power. For Heaven's sake, never, allow a feeling of this kind to come into your courts of justice. Your wife, your children, your property, all that is near and dear to you, personally and pecuniarily, and in every way, is involved in this request. But I do not wish to be understood as saying that this class of our people—I mean the professional part—is not as highly honorable and as useful in their places as others, not so, however, when they get out of their proper places, as any other class of the community. I have as much confidence and respect for them as I have for any others, when they are out of the way of improper influences, such as making money political preferments, &c. &c. I am unwilling, as a delegate from as pure a county as any in the State, to sit in my place quietly, and bear this sort of denunciation against those who honestly desire and make no effort to protect and take care of the rights of the people. You tell me that you are not looking to the arrangement of places for A or B or C. If all these things can be done without inflicting injury upon the people of the State, I have not the slightest objection. I have, however, just here some misgiving, I confess. I have no aspirations of this sort.

I stand here feebly battling with great odds against me, a plain farmer, with some little experience—not very limited though, for I have mingled a long time in every class of mankind, and so far as the rights of the people are concerned, and so far as the wishes of the people are ascertained and can be carried out, there is no man more anxious to do his part in carrying out those interests than myself. But when I see what I think to be a design to answer particular purposes, to carry out particular views, which I think are adverse, in theory and practice, to the interests of the people, I cannot sit silently, and let it go on. I have but one object in view. If I know myself, as I have before re-