

in the State that does not pay an average tax of 15 cents upon the \$100 for its own county system, doing nothing for a school fund. Up to last year 10 cents on the \$100 in the State of Maryland was paid willingly for the sinking fund for the extinction of the public debt. By the destruction of the bonds and stocks held by the State for the payment of the public debt, this 10 cents have been withdrawn and reduced the rate of taxation by that amount. Putting it back is no more than bringing the State taxation where it was last year. It adds not one cent of taxation in the State this year, but diminishes the tax in every county.

Meet the question fairly and squarely, if you wish to argue about taxation, whether it will be greater or less. But do not take the 20 cents on the \$100 and omit all reference to what you receive in your counties. That is not fair argument. Do not ignore the facts with reference to the counties. That is not the kind of argument which should be used in the formation of the constitution of your State. Even if you added the 20 cents it is worth that and more to you. If added to the taxation you paid in the counties, and to the State taxation you had last year, it is worth that to you, and your property under it will increase for every 20 cents on the \$100, 40 cents. But as the case stands your county taxes are decreased, and your State taxes not increased over last year. You will pay under the proposed provisions of this report every year \$300,000 to the school fund, which will finally free you from this last 10 cents on the \$100. The proceeds from the first tax of 10 cents to the \$100 will not be a dollar to each inhabitant of your State between five and twenty years of age. The State of Massachusetts, with exactly one-half more than Maryland, as I see by the last census, raised from her annual tax three times what you are asked to raise for your sinking fund. The gentleman has not seen the common school systems of the free States of this country. He has not read what they are doing for common school education; or if he has read, he has forgotten. The whole tax is not a dollar a head upon your people.

Nor will it take you eighteen or twenty years to form your school fund. The gentleman forgot to allow for interest. The \$300,000 increases every year by its own interest. He forgot that you add to it all the sinking fund the State has now. He forgot that the State has power to add to it all its bank stock. He forgot that the State can add to it its interest in the Washington branch of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad whenever it pleases. He forgot that as soon as there is a spirit manifested in this State to educate the people, there will be found men liberal enough and rich enough to give money to the State. There will be an inducement

to every lover of progress to give money to the State for so good a cause.

Take the history of other States. Have they grown poor under their school taxes? The State of Maryland has twice the square miles of Massachusetts; her industrial products are worth forty-three millions a year, and those of Massachusetts two hundred and sixty-six millions. Has Massachusetts grown poor under a school tax three times what is asked of you? For years the State of Maryland has been paying this school tax under its present system, and has never accomplished anything and never will. It has been frittered away. There is in scarcely a county of the State a school-house which you would not be ashamed to show a stranger. If some school-houses in Anne Arundel county are to be taken as indicating their love of literature and education, I think they have grossly misspent their money if they have imposed a school tax of one cent on the \$100. Has the city of Baltimore grown poor under a tax every year one-half of all that is asked from the State upon the first 10 cents on the \$100? You have not heard a word from her representatives upon this floor, against this tax upon the whole taxable property of the city of Baltimore for the benefit of the counties. Not one word of opposition have you heard to that, although into this report was deliberately put the whole taxable property of the State, that the whole property of the city of Baltimore may be taxed for the first 10 cents on the \$100 for the benefit of the counties.

I am prepared in defence of this system to meet any fair argument that may be urged. But I am surprised when a gentleman professes to desire a free school system, and then makes an argument which shows but half the fact and that half opposed to the object. It is hard enough to advocate anything in this State that looks like popular improvement or progress, when met by fair objections, when we have only to overcome fair prejudices, and fair doubts, and honest ignorance. But let them, I pray you, be always fair, and let the arguments advanced be such as a man may honestly and fully believe to be actually sound.

As the quorum has diminished so that we have not enough now here to vote upon this question, I will say that I think if gentlemen before they sleep to-night will think over the taxes they have paid last year in the counties of the State, and will figure this up, they will find that so far from increasing, this diminishes their tax. There remains but one of two things; either to undo all that you have done this day upon this question, or to provide sufficient means to carry it into effect. This convention cannot afford to stultify itself by declaring itself in favor of a certain system, and then declining to pro-