

Committee, and whether any member interested in such accounts is on the Auditing Committee, as Chairman or Member thereof, or whether any member of this General Assembly is directly, or indirectly, interested in the profits of the printing contract for the present Session, have according to order had the same under consideration, and beg leave to make the following report :

In the first place, it became necessary to consider the oath taken by a member, which says, "I will not directly or indirectly receive the profits, or any part of the profits of any other office during the term of my acting as Senator or Delegate," and to find out the reasons for the administration of such an oath before coming to a conclusion as to whether or not it is inconsistent with that oath, for a member of either branch of the Legislature of Maryland, to be interested in the public printing.

Why should a member be prevented from receiving the profits from an other office, is the first question which presents itself, and the reason is clear, viz : Because if he were allowed so to do, he might forget the State's good, and use his influence for individual aggrandizement and general corruption, and the buying and selling of offices would be the result.

The next question is, whether the State Printer spoken of in the Code is a State officer? And as to whether he is or not, there may be a difference of opinion, but this difference cannot effect the present enquiry, which seeks rather to prevent evils than to prosecute. If it is wrong for a member of the Legislature to receive the profits from what is an office *where remuneration is small-it must be much more so* for him to receive the profits from a contract *which may be great*. Therefore it is contrary to the spirit of the oath taken by a member, and contrary to the spirit of the Constitution of Maryland, for him to receive the profits from a contract, although not against the letter of the oath, in the opinion of a majority of the Committee. That it is not "sound public policy," follows as a matter of course, from what has been said. If it is contrary to the spirit of the oath, it must not only be contrary to "sound public policy" but contrary to good morals for a member of a Legislative Body to be interested in any contract made by the Body, of which he is a member, as a proof of which, we have only to think of the fraud and corruption which has resulted from members of Legislative Assemblies being allowed to receive the profits from contracts.

And we do further report that the accounts for printing are audited by the Joint Printing Committee of the House