

But there are some subjects to which I will refer briefly, because public attention is already awakened in regard to them ; and because a part at least of the responsibility must rest upon my shoulders.

First. Let me urge upon you the importance of making the best possible use of the limited time allowed for your deliberations by the Constitution of our State.

You have but ninety days in which to deal with a vast number of important questions, demanding your serious consideration.

And you cannot waste a single day, without doing injustice to those whose commissions you bear. I do not presume to outline these duties, for they lie within your province rather than mine. I respectfully suggest that you clear away promptly whatever there is that might interfere in the slightest with active and efficient legislation. Give your time and labor to the people whose servants you are. Devolving upon you is the unusual duty of selecting two gentlemen to represent the State in the councils of the nation. That you will choose wisely and with a single eye to the importance of the service to be rendered I cannot doubt. But it is wise that your selection should be made promptly, fearing that delay might possibly impede your progress in other directions. It is proper that I remind you of the fact that certain amendments to the Constitution were ratified by the people at the recent election, and that you will be called upon to give effect to some of them by appropriate legislation. How far you may deem it your duty to revise the tax laws of the State you can best determine for yourself, but it is clear that the tax laws of the State need revision public sentiment has been awakened on this subject. And the dominant political party of the State in convention assembled, in July last, declared itself, and thereby committed the majority of this General Assembly to the enactment of a just and proper assessment law. Since the last general assessment, which was in 1876, the wealth of the State has largely increased with its growing population and resources ; and it is but reasonable to suppose that if our present system of taxation were reformed, the burdens would be more justly dis-