

the condition of the finances; the resources of the State; its plighted faith; the obligations of the Legislature to meet it, and the impropriety in the Legislature, to intercept the action of the committee of ways and means, on the subject. [See page 68, of same journal.]

On the same day, Mr. LeGrande of Baltimore, and a Democrat, offered others, declaring that whilst it is the duty of the Legislature to provide adequate means for the support of Governments, "those ends may for the present be attained without a resort to direct taxation." [See page 70, of same journal.]

These resolutions elicited in the House a warm and excited debate, and after various discussions, another distinguished Whig, Mr. Luck, now a member of this Convention, submitted on the twenty-third of January, another set of resolutions denouncing in very strong terms the message of Governor Grason, and declaring "that this Legislature does not concur in the suggestion of the message, that the revenue should be increased by a direct tax laid on the real and personal property of the people." [See page 126, of same journal.]

It will readily be perceived, how completely the committee of ways and means were embarrassed. The entire whig party in the House, stood firm to a man in opposition to Governor Grason's message. At the same time, although the democrats had a majority in the House, there was a small division of them, who, with the whigs, opposed a direct tax. Every effort was made to induce a small portion of the whig party to act with and support the committee of ways and means. Three distinguished gentlemen from Baltimore, and he mentioned it with infinite pleasure, for it did them great honor—Messrs. Grafton Dulany, J. V. L. McMahan and William Schley, visited in person the whig members and appealed to them to come to the rescue of the chairman of the committee of ways and means, as he was ready to report a tax, if he could carry it. It was urged, that it could then be done, free from party influence. That the governor, a democrat; the treasurer, a whig, and the chairman of the committee of ways and means, a democrat, had supported, and were in favor of it, and it only required a small support from whig members, to carry a measure which should rise above party. It was urged that the measure would have to come and that it had better come at once. But the appeal was in vain. The committee could not get support sufficient to carry the measure and it was driven to resort to the best expedients which could be carried under the circumstances, and to assign the best reasons that could be furnished, for pursuing such a course.

A temporary expedient was adopted, but with it went forth the annunciation in the report of the committee, that upon the faith which capitalists, at home and abroad, gave to our acts of assembly, they have been induced to subscribe their money. In this manner, the debt has been created. The money has been actually borrowed and distributed through the State, in payment

of officers, contractors and laborers, who have been employed on the public works."

"The professed design was an advancement of the common prosperity of the people. So far, the end contemplated has failed, and the State is called upon to redeem its obligations."

"We must so act as to prove, that what we owe, we intend to pay. Every principle of honor, virtue and patriotism, compels us to such a course. It is not the characteristic of an American to mould his principles to subserve his selfishness. What he would require of another, he will perform himself. His principle is to exact nothing but what is right, and submit to nothing that is wrong."

"When General Jackson was the President of the United States, he insisted upon a payment of a debt due by the French Government. In enforcing the claim, the friendly intercourse between the two nations, were for a while arrested. We were upon the verge of war. Great as was the opposition to his administration, on other subjects, upon this question the hearts of all united. Though the controversy was with France, our ancient ally, when we were struggling for political liberty and independence, still as the demand of the government was just, past friendship was forgotten, and the course of the administration ardently sustained. The chivalry of the nation was aroused, and nothing but an unconditional payment of the debt would have been tolerated. It must not be said of us, that what we exacted of France, we will refuse to others."

"If the period has arrived, when to pay the interest on this debt, all other resources have failed except direct taxation, we must resort to it."

That, in the opinion of the committee, "there is no necessity to provide for a direct tax, at present, but they cannot disguise the fact, that after the year 1841, it will be inevitable, unless the Chesapeake and Ohio canal company, and the Baltimore and Susquehanna railroad company, shall contribute largely to the payment of the interest on the public debt."

[See report of committee of ways and means—Session 1839.]

Mr. BROWN demanded the previous question, but waived it at the request of

Mr. DONALDSON, between whom and Messrs. SPENCER and CHAMBERS, of Kent, some explanations passed.

Mr. BROWN renewed the demand for the previous question.

There was a second.

And the main question was ordered to be now taken.

Mr. GRASON enquired, if it would now be in order to move a call of the House.

The chair, at this time, was occupied by Mr. BLAKISTONE.

The PRESIDENT of the Convention rose and said, that under the new rule, a call of the House was not in order, after the main question had been ordered.

Mr. SPENCER said, that the vote on such a question ought not to be taken without a full House. He moved, therefore, a reconsideration