

those sections go, I approve of them entirely; for they declare,

First, "The Legislature, hereafter, shall contract no debt, unless they provide for its payment by a tax, levied at the time; which tax shall never be diverted to any other purpose." This taxing accompaniment will be the best security against contracting debt in future, that we could possibly have; for whilst, in case of foreign invasion or domestic insurrection, it might become necessary to contract debt, in which emergency, the power is not denied, yet for purposes of mere policy, the power would be inoperative, because of the responsibility of delegates to their constituents and the aversion of the people to taxation.

Second, "Two-thirds of the Legislature shall be requisite to appropriate public money, and the Legislature shall not have the power to make appropriations, loans or subscriptions to any work of internal improvement." I say I voted for both of these sections, but they do not go far enough; we want some indemnity for the past, as well as security for the future, and that was the object designed to be secured, by the amendment I offered yesterday.

Gentlemen thought that amendment susceptible of improvement and the section I offer now, in lieu of the one proposed on yesterday, embodies those improvements, while it retains the original provisions, looking to the stability of our financial system until a time when the sinking fund shall be increased to an amount large enough to anticipate the payment of the State bonds at the periods when they shall severally become due; after which, it requires a distribution amongst the counties and city of Baltimore, of the nett revenues of the public works according to the mode provided in resolution No. 47 of the General Assembly of December session passed 1833. It was because of the mode of distribution, that I preferred this substitute. By the resolution of 1833, No. 47, the whole of the nett revenues of the internal improvements would be distributed as follows: One half would be divided into twenty parts and given to each county and Baltimore city equally, while the other half would be divided between the counties and city of Baltimore, according to their respective white population. This would give to the counties a larger share than they would obtain on the principle of distribution according to taxation as proposed on yesterday.

Sir, I regret the necessity for such a provision in the Constitution as much as any gentleman in this Convention can, but I am not to be swerved from a course I deem just and right, because, forsooth, it argues a want of confidence in the Legislature of the State. This is not the arena or the occasion for an exhibition of those very delicate shades of refinement that forbid the exercise of prudence on a matter of such grave interest to the people of this State.

I heard it argued yesterday, that the Legislature had always been a safe depository of the public trust, and might well claim our confidence in the future management of the finances of the State. Sir, what some gentlemen approve, I

disapprove, and there lies the issue. If, as it is argued, the present financial system of the State, will, with the aid of the sinking fund, pay our debt in twelve years, is it not good policy, to secure inviolate that system until the expiration of that time? Some say the treasury will be in a state to admit a reduction in the taxes in a very short time, and it would be hard the Legislature should be debarred giving any relief. They would have a reduction of five cents two years hence, and a reduction of five more two years after that, but they would continue the remaining fifteen cents till 1890, to meet the payment of the last bonds then due. I would like to know the difference in paying twenty-five cents on the \$100 for twelve years, and then be entirely released from direct taxes—and a payment, by taxation, equal in amount but varied in rate, and interspersed through a lapse of forty years. Could we hear the response of the people of this State, I am very sure it would be in favor of continuing the twenty-five cent tax until the whole debt is paid or the sinking fund increased sufficiently to pay it when due. Not that the people love taxation, but if the money must be paid, they would sooner do it, in a reasonable time, than transmit, with their property to future generations, this eternal and inalienable tax.

Continue the present tax of twenty-five cents on the one hundred dollars until the proposed time, and our people will pay it cheerfully, because they would the sooner be released from taxation altogether, and the sooner share the benefits of what they have already paid. But adopt the other plan, and change, alter, raise and lower the taxes, to suit the policy of every administration, and the theory of every tyro in finance, who may hold a seat in the legislature; and you will certainly do one of two things—you will exasperate the public mind, by a constant vacillation in your revenue laws, or you will inure the whole state to a system of taxation that is to be perpetual. I am opposed to perpetual taxation. I never want our people to recognise it, as the settled policy of the State, nor would I wantonly tantalize their most ardent desires for exemption from taxation entirely.

I well remember the struggles and remonstrances made by the people of my county, before yielding to the present tax laws; that county was one of the seven referred to on yesterday, by the gentleman from Frederick, (Mr. Thomas,) who repudiated the *justice* and *equity* of those tax laws, devised by, and under the administration of Mr. Pratt.

That gentleman then held a warm place in the affections of the people of Worcester county, but in his fixed and steady purpose to maintain the faith of the State, he found it necessary to recommend a system of tax laws, considered oppressive and unjust, by the people of that county, and this caused the love of many to wax cold towards him. Moved by high patriotic motives, we yielded to the burdens of taxation, only to throw them off at the earliest practical moment.

We have lived to see the policy of that gentleman, developing itself in a manner flattering to