

tice, which has heretofore obtained, in respect to Executive appointments; and, for which, I can see no just reason. An examination of the original act, imposing a tax on civil commissions, passed at December session 1843, and its several supplements, will, I think, satisfy you that, it was the intention of your Predecessors to fix a reasonable charge, proportionate to the tenure and value of each office. You are aware that, when a vacancy is filled, during the recess of the Senate, a commission issues, which must be renewed, so soon as the appointment shall have been confirmed by that Honorable Body. In accordance with the strict letter, but, as I conceive, against the spirit of those laws, the full tax has been exacted, hitherto, upon each commission; although, the first was issued for only a portion of the term of a previous incumbent, who had already paid the tax upon the whole. A rateable payment, merely, should be required.

The Constitution has obliterated from the Statute Book that relic of ancient barbarism,—imprisonment for debt. Why? First, because it was inhuman, to incarcerate a man, on account of his misfortunes; and secondly, because his confinement only rendered him the less able to meet his obligations. This latter very excellent reason is practically annulled, by the operation of the existing attachment laws. As soon as a poor debtor's weekly wages fall due, some watchful creditor is there to seize upon them. Thus, the honest laborer, striving to lift his head above the waves of despair, is periodically re-plunged into the most abject despondency. Perhaps, a little time, and a cheering word would have enabled him to pay out of his hard earnings, the debts of misfortune. But, no! his spirit is crushed by continual pressure. No chance is given him to recover his equilibrium, before another blow dashes him, hopelessly, to the earth. Modify the attachment laws; without, if possible, enlarging the opportunities of fraud. But, modify them, any how. Let not the innocent suffer, for the guilty. Enact laws, of any degree of severity, to punish the swindler; but, take not from the mouths of an honest debtor's children the bread, whereby they live. Let credit be given more upon personal character. That is the proper basis for it. The man who trusts his goods or money, upon any other principle, generally leans upon the slender reed of speculation. He makes; or, he loses. After all, prudent Capital has only to fear that description of men, who, even under the old system, never failed to elude justice, by over-leaping the barriers of conscience and the law. I regard this case as fully within the spirit and intendment of the thirty-ninth Section of the third Article of the Constitution; but, I have called your attention to it, because a different view is entertained by those, whose judgment is entitled to respect. This may be the proper place for an allusion to a kindred subject; which is of paramount importance to the welfare of the working classes. I have reference to the regulation, by law, of the hours of labor. This question has engaged the attention of the ablest philanthropists of the Age; and