

and report upon a uniform system of inspections.

Mr. HENKLE said: The subject of inspection is not included in the duties of any of the committees already provided for. It is important that in framing a new Constitution we should provide for a uniform system of inspection in Maryland.

Mr. MILLER. I think that subject devolves entirely upon the committee on the Legislative Department. If they see fit they will provide in the new Constitution that the Legislature shall provide a uniform system of inspection; and I do not think it is necessary to have a special committee for that particular purpose.

Mr. STIRLING. I hardly think it is worth while to make much difficulty about such propositions. We may as well test this question at once. It seems to me that what has fallen from the last gentleman who has spoken is very sound. If the subject has any bearing at all upon the Constitution, it properly belongs to that committee. But I do not see that it has any bearing at all upon the question which we have met here to consider. I do not see that a Constitutional Convention, in framing the organic law of the State, has any business with the subject of inspections. It is a matter of ordinary legislative discretion, in which the Legislature ought not be controlled in any way whatever. I have a very general belief that Legislatures have about as much sense as Constitutional Conventions. I believe that one body of eighty or one hundred men can be as safely trusted as another body of eighty or one hundred men. In framing the Constitution, I desire that we should frame merely general organic law, and enter into few details. It is a mischievous notion that the Constitution should decide a great many questions which it ought not to meddle with at all. For these reasons I am disposed to vote against this proposition. I wish to give every question relating to matters properly belonging to the Constitution a full and fair discussion; but I do not wish to be placed in the position of passing unnecessarily upon any idea that any gentleman wishes to have discussed.

Mr. HENKLE. It is simply upon the ground that organic law should embrace general principles of uniform application that I proposed this committee, with the desire that some general principle should control this subject of inspections, and that the Constitution should say that the Legislature shall provide a uniform system. It is not now uniform; and it is that it may be a general uniform principle that I desire to have it in the Constitution if the Convention sees fit.

The order was rejected.

COMMITTEE ON USURY LAWS.

Mr. BELT submitted the following order:

Ordered, That a Standing Committee of five members be appointed to consider and report upon Section 49 of Article 3 of the present

Constitution, having reference to interest and the usury laws.

Mr. BELT said: If members will cast their eyes over the third article of the present Constitution, having reference to the Legislative Department, they will see that there are a great many subjects that fall within the deliberations of the Legislative Committee. The last section of that article is this:

"SEC. 49. The rate of interest in this State shall not exceed six per cent. per annum, and no higher rate shall be taken or demanded, and the Legislature shall provide by law all necessary forfeitures and penalties against usury."

This opens a subject which is not only of very great consequence; but which has, since the adoption of this Constitution, given rise to a great deal of agitation. It has no necessary connection with the subject of the Legislative Department, but is a subject in itself, and one which merits careful consideration. I fear we shall not be able to act properly in reference to this question, unless we have a special committee appointed for that purpose. Those gentlemen who are acquainted, as many of us necessarily are, with the discussions and the conflicting views upon this subject, especially in modern times, will agree with me, I am sure, that the consideration of that subject solely will be sufficient to occupy one committee. I do not wish in any way to interfere with the number or the character of the committees that the majority may choose to order for the proper transaction of business; but upon consultation with gentlemen upon both sides, I am of opinion that this subject of the usury laws, whether or not they shall be sanctioned by the Constitution, whether or not the Legislature shall be tied up in reference to the subject, is one upon which a committee may safely and properly be raised.

The order was agreed to.

The President appointed the following committee in accordance with the above order: Messrs. Belt, Stockbridge, Schley, Billingsley and Todd.

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL OFFICERS.

Mr. HEBB. I ask that the Convention now act upon the order submitted by the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) on Tuesday, to be found on page 13 of the Journal. It is:

Ordered, That a standing committee, to consist of seven members, be appointed by the President of the Convention, to consider and report respecting the appointment, tenure of office, duties and compensation of all civil officers not embraced in the duties of other standing committees.

This embraces a number of officers, among others the Commissioners of Public Works—not embraced in the duties of any other committee. I am in favor of such a committee and I think it is very important.

Mr. BERRY of Prince George's. The mem-