

having the alternative provision retained. I will simply state that the reason given to me was, in brief, that the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal might be leased to the preferred creditors, who are citizens of Montgomery, Frederick, Washington, and Allegany counties, and who as citizens have a double interest, both in the usefulness of that particular work, and in its being remunerative to the State. That is a brief outline of the general argument. I hope that the gentleman will not come to the conclusion that it must be absolutely disposed of or else retained. I think it is inadvisable, for many good and sufficient reasons to retain it. I do not insist upon this; and I do not wish the Convention to understand that I am in favor as an individual of the alternative proposition. I prefer to dispose of the interest outright. I think it well, though, that it should be referred to the judgment of the General Assembly, because when they meet the same reasons will be urged upon them; and if they find at that time that they are insufficient, they will pass a law to sell absolutely.

Mr. CHAMBERS. I do not think the reasons last stated by any means necessarily lead to the conclusion. We all know—and in this respect I do not mean to criminate one party more than another—that some of those works—at least it is so said, and it is universally believed—have been made subjects of political interest and political agency in the State. The misfortune is that those who have the political power at the moment, have an interest in keeping these works in their hands. They control the officers who control the works; and those officers will necessarily be of their appointment. We have no such political tendencies to gratify. We do not know who is to be the appointing officer. I ask the members of this body the serious question, as citizens of this State, as persons desiring to see the purity of our elections preserved, and everything else conducive to the administration of republican government among us, is it fair to place in the hands of the appointee of the Legislature the control of such works, the interest of such works as the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, for instance? Is it well to give the Legislature the appointment of an officer, of course agreeing with them in political sentiment, with power to control that whole institution, for whatever consideration they may deem it proper to ask? Is it not establishing a source of crimination and recrimination, a source of abuse, without the profit of a dollar to the State? There are many institutions of this sort; I do not know how many, but I know the general fact that there are others; and I say, to avoid expense, in the name of common sense, common justice, and common patriotism, let us get rid of them. I was happy to hear the gentleman from Frederick (Mr. Schley) say that from his acquaintance with

the matters, his private opinion is so and so. His opinion as a man will, of course, secure his vote in accordance with that opinion.

As to the arrangement to which he alludes, is it proper to give any persons advantages, such that any sharper who chooses to take an unfair advantage may supersede them? Is it better to lease to these creditors, scattered all over the world? I do think we would better at once wipe our hands of the concern. We all know that the tendencies are to seek private advantage; and how can we adopt this section when everybody is trying to make a grab at the treasury, and to plunge his hand into the public works? I hope the amendment will prevail.

Mr. SCHLEY. I wish the gentleman to understand that I am in favor of his amendment. I am decidedly in favor of getting rid of the public works, putting them out of the hands of the State at the earliest practical and expedient moment. I merely stated the reasons why the committee made the report as it stands, and that there might be good reasons for referring it to the discretion of the Legislature. The member of the committee who was particularly interested in this alternative provision, is absent to-day. If he were here I suppose he would state in full what I have merely stated in brief; that there are reasons applicable to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal that do not apply to the other public works of the State. The words "lease or otherwise dispose of," were incorporated in the section solely with reference to that public work.

Mr. CHAMBERS. Does the gentleman from Frederick think it advisable to defer action?

Mr. SCHLEY. I have not asked it. I am not requested to defer it at all.

Mr. SANDS. I should like to see the consideration of the subject postponed, until we can get information from those interested.

Mr. SCHLEY. It is not necessary.

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. WICKARD moved to insert after "creditor" in line 4, the words: "As also all the stocks the State may hold in the banking institutions of this State."

Mr. ABBOTT. What did the committee intend to cover by that section? Is not that already understood? I should like to know also whether it includes the State tobacco warehouses? It appears to me to be indefinite as it is now; and it will perhaps produce trouble in the Legislature, unless it specifies more exactly what it is intended to embrace.

Mr. STIRLING. It cannot cover bank stock, for it expressly says, "works of internal improvement." That is definite and specific. It means railroads and canals, and it cannot mean anything else. Then it proceeds—"in which the State is either stockholder or creditor." That cannot cover the State tobacco warehouse, which, like the State House, is