

they do about any other. So far as my constituents are concerned, I know they would be willing to go back to the old form of appointing all these officers. It was an experiment made in this State and carried out, it seems to me, further than any State in the Union, going down to the election of justices of the peace, constables and road supervisors, by the people, bringing in all the little local affairs of each part of the county into the general politics of the State, combining them, and mixing them together, and, as has been stated, swapping off one of these little petty offices for the more important office of representative to Congress, or governor of the State.

I am opposed to the system of electing these officers by the people, and I am willing to go back to the old system of appointment. My constituents are not afraid of it. I do not believe the people of the State are afraid of it. I am sure that if we can accomplish this reform we shall be doing a great good to our people. And as I am satisfied that the negro will carry this constitution, I want to put into it as many good things as possible.

Mr. SCOTT. The "negro" will carry it! We do not propose to give him the right to vote.

Mr. MILLER. I mean the emancipation clause will carry it, and we can put into it just what we please.

Mr. ECKER. It may be presumption in me, but I should like to ask the gentleman from Anne Arundel (Mr. Miller,) what is his definition of the word "reform." His mode of reforming seems to be somewhat of the crab order. If reforming is going back I know nothing about reform.

Mr. SANDS. I do not see why the people have not a better chance to cure these evils in their districts than we have here. Who are interested in the roads of the counties? The gentleman who own the real estate and travel over those roads every day to their homesteads. Are they not enough interested in the roads over which they travel every day to select a good supervisor to see that they have good roads? So with justices of the peace and constables. Who are the people interested in those officers? The people that choose them. As to this taking constables, justices of the peace and road supervisors out of county politics, by making them appointed by the county commissioners, there is nothing at all in the idea. It does not take them out of politics at all. It puts them right in. Instead of going round to do their duty, making good roads, or doing their duty as justices of the peace and magistrates, they are going round electioneering for A. B. to make him commissioner, and button-holing him afterwards, as my friend (Mr. Scott) says, to appoint them. It does not change the politics one bit. It only takes the election out of the hands of the

people, and gives the appointment to a politician who has been run with and shouted for by the fellow whom he appoints.

My friend says this was an experiment in 1850; and that it was a dangerous one, and worked badly. If we attempt now to take from the people a right they have exercised, and which is theirs, that may be a very dangerous experiment; for although I believe this constitution is going to be carried through, not by the negro, but by white men, true and loyal men, yet I will not do anything to endanger it. I think we would better let the people choose the men to make the roads, and if the people of the counties choose to elect bad supervisors, I hope the roads will jolt them into a better course of conduct. I think we would better adhere to elections, and not make too many dangerous experiments.

Mr. PURNELL. I do not profess to speak authoritatively for any other county of the State; but I do say, representing in part the county of Worcester, that I have never heard a single individual but has expressed a wish for this change. The effect of the working and operation under the constitution of 1850, in this particular, has been a perfect and total failure. The consequence has been that since the adoption of that constitution; and the election of road supervisors under it, we have had no good roads in Worcester. And without a change in this respect there is no probability that we shall have. The universal wish, so far as I understand the opinion, and it has been freely expressed in Worcester, is that there should be a change; that the system should return to the old plan of appointing overseers by the board of commissioners, and letting out the road by districts, by sections; appointing overseers who will supervise faithfully, diligently and practically the roads, and keep them in good condition.

Under the system of the present constitution, the road supervisor is elected every two years for each district. Many of the districts are so very large that it is utterly impossible for him with ordinary diligence and vigilance to discharge his duties; because if he discharges them at one point, his duties are so extensive, and the district so large that by the time he reaches the other end the roads where he began are as bad if not worse than when he commenced. The object is to return to the old system, in order that we may have not only one overseer and one supervisor as provided by the present constitution, but that the commissioners may have the power of appointing as many overseers as may be necessary to keep the roads in good condition, as was the case under the old system.

Mr. SANDS. That difficulty is practically met in this way, that the men elected as road supervisors generally farm the roads out in the different parts of the State.

Mr. STIRLING. That is the very reason they have no roads.