

would go immediately on the passage of this bill. From the indications he should suppose also that the Convention would be afraid to leave the matter under the control of the Legislature, as they seemed to think there was so much danger of corruption in that body.

Mr. Syester had nothing to say about the justice of the claims of the bondholders, but if they had a right to lay their hands upon this great work, upon which the State and the people had poured out their treasure like water, the grounds of that right were not to be ascertained by any mere loose statements which might be made here. If this Convention was to strip itself of its proper character, and step far into the forbidden domain—if it was to assume a judicial character—he would say that they were not taking the proper means to ascertain the true facts in the case. The Convention wanted light. Who of all the members who had spoken had given an account of the contract made with the bondholders in 1848, and the terms of it? Were they without proper knowledge to give up this work, in which the interests of our people were so deeply bound up, to a class of strangers not of us? It was a question whether this Convention was not exceeding its powers. They were now dealing with an *incorporated company*, the charter of which was guaranteed by the State of Maryland, and could it be abrogated? He was now in the presence of a Convention, many of the members of which had suffered during the late civil commotions the very thing which they now proposed to do; to trespass upon the rights of others. He hoped they would not send out to the people an instrument bearing upon its face such an infringement upon the immunities of others. What right had this Convention to act as umpire between the canal company and its creditors. He read from the charter of the company, and maintained that there was no power in the Convention to make any provision for the control of the canal and the appointment of directors inconsistent with the terms of the charter, which this section was plainly in violation of. It might be said that this was a sovereign Convention, and had power to do what it pleased, but although there might be no defined limits to its powers laid down in any law, they were limited by common sense, and this Convention should