

ing considered hostile to the great cause of education. On that subject he had a zeal always warm. He would, if he could, send a ray of intelligence—that Promethean fire from Heaven, to illumine every darkened mind on earth.

Some explanation here took place, as to the construction of the amendment of the gentleman from Queen Anne's, [Mr. George] as amended by the gentleman from Montgomery, [Mr. Davis,] whether it gave an unlimited or merely limited power to the Legislature, to appropriate the public money for the purposes of education.

Mr. PRESTMAN thought that the construction of the amendment by the gentleman from Queen Anne's, [Mr. Spencer,] could not be sustained. He here read the amendment, and commented upon the limitations contained in it, so far as the one hundred thousand dollars was allowed in the first branch, for certain objects, and fifty thousand dollars allowed in the latter branch, to supply a temporary deficit. It was undoubtedly the object of the gentleman from Montgomery, and so avowed, that appropriations, for educational purposes, should be the exception to the operation of these restrictions as to amount. Most unquestionably, such was the clear and manifest reading of the amendment as adopted. He desired to make a single remark upon the expediency and justice of the proposition, in the view which he had stated.

The maintenance of a public school system in this State, to further the great objects of education, found no greater advocate than himself. But, sir, what sort of a system is best calculated to produce the end in view, with justice to all, may well admit of doubt. He was admonished by the past, that in the distribution of the school fund, a due regard was not had to the relative population of the counties and the city of Baltimore. As for the past, perhaps, that was beyond remedy, but he protested against the power to impose taxes upon the people of the State, where an unfair distribution was likely to follow. Here is an effort to introduce a State system to be supported out of the general treasury. To this theory, in whole or in part, first and last, he was utterly opposed. Let each county and city levy taxes for the support of their own public school system. While Baltimore city had contributed, by a tax on the bank stock of corporations, situated within its limits, and owned almost exclusively by her citizens, a very large share of the school fund, she receives in return a mere pittance. Her present school system was one of great cost to the inhabitants of that city but she did not seek legislative aid. The precedent once set, would be a dangerous one, of endowing schools and colleges throughout the State. Those who are now here struggling to secure some acknowledgement of the rights of the majority, could hardly be expected to place the Treasury of the State, swelled by a new system of taxation, under the control of the representatives of a small minority of the people of the State.

Mr. BROWN said, he should vote for the motion of the gentleman from Frederick to reconsider. He believed there was a committee on education; and it would be better to postpone this

whole subject until we have a report from that committee. The amendment removes all restriction from the Legislature. Under it they may borrow money; and he could not agree to the imposing of a tax for the support of a system of education. The county of Carroll had raised a fund of from fifty to sixty thousand dollars as a school fund, and had just put the schools in operation. And he could not consent to give power to the Legislature to apply the money out of Treasury and even to go so far as to create a new debt for the purpose of establishing a system of education. He knew it was a popular movement, but it was a dangerous one. The subject was new, and started suddenly on the Convention; and we ought not to act hastily upon it. Let us first pay off our debt before we go into new expenditures. He could not go for a splendid school system. He was for educating the children, as they were in Carroll. There was an academy at Carroll, which was the worst managed of all the schools.

Mr. SPENCER said, he intended to vote for the motion of the gentleman from Frederick to reconsider. He felt himself compelled to vote yesterday for the amendment proposed by the gentleman from Montgomery as he found it, because he thought that the modification as it previously stood, excluded the power to make an appropriation for education. The section tied up the Legislature from making appropriations for the benefit of individuals, so that no individual could be educated nor schools supported by public appropriations. He was not willing to tie up the hands of that body, so that no appropriation could hereafter be made for education. He would prefer now that the motion of the gentleman from Frederick should prevail. Not because his mind had undergone any change, as to the legal effect of the amendment. On the contrary he was of the opinion still, that it would not bear the construction given it by the gentleman from Frederick. There was no unlimited power given to the Legislature by this amendment. It would bear no such construction. He then read the section as it stood, with the amendment of the gentleman from Montgomery, and stated his own view of the proper construction which it warranted.

There was a limitation to the amount of one hundred thousand dollars, to any appropriation which could be made, and that appropriation the Legislature could apply for any purpose, except for the restraining clause which follows, which expressly leave them the power to appropriate for education. The true meaning of the section as amended is that the Legislature shall not have the power to create any debt above one hundred thousand dollars, except to supply a temporary deficit in the Treasury of fifty thousand dollars, or to provide for defence in time of war or insurrection. It was limited to three specific objects. But as there was a difference of opinion as to the construction of the motion, he was willing that it should be reconsidered to be made more clear, by an amendment he intended to offer.

Mr. THOMAS insisted that if the gentleman