

fuse to impose any limitation whatever." I do not think it is a very difficult matter to decide where the inconsistency is. In truth, sir, this doctrine of retrenchment is very elastic; it can be stretched to cover any case, where it affects political adversaries, but it contracts at once when the case is presented of a political friend—it can't reach him.

Mr. BOWIE said, that he had not been actuated by any party motives whatever, and did not suppose that any gentleman upon this floor had been so actuated. He had not voted to refer this whole matter to the Legislature, because the present incumbents belonged to his political party. He had thought it best to leave the whole matter to the Legislature, and had voted against the introduction of any such office into the Constitution; but he had been overruled. The Convention had thought proper to engraft that office upon the Constitution. Was there any thing wrong in attempting to define and fix the salary of offices which were created by the Constitution? Was it inconsistent for them to refuse to raise the salary, because the new Board might perhaps belong to a different political party from those now in office? He did not wish the salary to be too low. The officers ought to be well and liberally paid; but it was right that the salary should be fixed in the Constitution if by the Constitution the office itself was created. He could see no propriety in leaving the compensation to be fixed by the law. Thus far the action of the Convention had been final in regard to all offices created by the Constitution. This had been done as a matter of precaution and of honest retrenchment. The Convention had been very cautious to create the office; and was it too much to ask that the same instrument which created the office should affix the salary. He did not regard the sum of \$200 as enough, and he should therefore vote against this proposition. But whatever might be the amount, it ought now to be fixed, and not left to the fluctuating influences brought to bear upon a future Legislature. The gentleman from Anne Arundel (Mr. Dorsey,) seemed to think that the Board would have very many duties besides those now performed by the State agents, to superintend the accounts, to go up and down the Canal, &c., and that they should be handsomely compensated. He (Mr. B.) was not willing to trust that question to the Legislature. They might give too little; or under a state of excitement, from party influence and party machinery, raise the amount up to \$2,500 or \$3000. It had already been said that this was the most important office in the State, and that \$3,000 would not be too high a compensation; and it had been said that thousands of dollars might be saved by the vigilance of the Board to the Treasury of the State. Influences and opinions of that kind might be brought to bear upon the Legislature, and especially if prominent gentlemen should be elected by the people to this office. Perhaps the gentleman from Frederick, [Mr. Thomas,] himself might be elected to that station. If the precaution was not now taken to provide the salary in the Constitution, it would spring up

from two or three hundred dollars to three or four thousand. It mattered not what sum the first Legislature should fix. So long as the salary was in the hands of the Legislature, subject to change, the process of augmentation would be continually going on. He wished to guard against this. If, as the gentleman from Frederick had said, the honor would be looked to more than the compensation, why should that gentleman oppose any limitation of the salary? Why leave this as a *casus omissus* in the Constitution? It might do for casuists or for special pleaders, to make an argument out of the inconsistency of others; but he would ask the gentleman from Frederick to answer the objections he (Mr. B.) had urged; and to show why such a provision should not be introduced into the Constitution as would fix the salary and place it forever out of the reach of political influence and machinery.

Mr. THOMAS said, from the very commencement of the discussion, he had explained his reason for not wishing to fix the compensation in the Constitution. It was because the Legislature had power to extend the powers and duties of the board, and being unable to foresee the extent of those duties, it would be impossible to affix a just compensation. He had said that the Legislature need not, in his opinion, superadd the duties imposed by the amendments of the gentlemen from Baltimore and Anne Arundel, and Montgomery. These duties belonged to the President and Directors of the Company, and not to the State's Agents. But the Legislature might think fit to superadd those duties. With the present duties, he had said that a salary of one or two hundred dollars would be sufficient.

As to any aspirations he might have, they certainly would not be, as the gentleman had intimated, to be elected to the control of any corporation in Maryland. It would be a wider sphere which he should seek. But he did not intend to fill hereafter any political office that this Convention would create.

Mr. CHAMBERS. I will be perfectly candid, Mr. President, as I wish always to be. I believe, and have no cause to doubt, that the gentleman is sincere, when he says he does not now intend or desire to fill any political office. No doubt, he thinks, at this moment, he never will intend or desire it. But I must go further, and remark, that I have known as great and as good men, and men of as firm resolution as that gentleman, who have expressed, and no doubt at the time sincerely expressed, the same opinion; and yet they have yielded to the wishes of friends and the interests of the country. Sir, General Jackson told me, at his own table, that when the Florida war was at an end, he hailed with a glad heart the prospect of getting to the Hermitage, to pass the residue of his life in the enjoyment of all the blessings of social and domestic life, resolved to retire forever from the cares and anxieties of public station. And yet, sir, when this conversation occurred, he was the Chief Magistrate of this great Nation, deeply involved in all the perplexing duties and toils of a politician. He had been called out by ardent friends, he had become