

having previously gone into operation, and under which Governor Grason had been elected Governor of the State, the Legislature, by party votes, and looking to the party machinery of those works, not only took from the Governor and the Senate the power of appointment, but passed an act prescribing that, thereafter, the agents should be appointed by the concurring vote of the two branches of the Legislature. Did not every one know that the object was that they should control party measures by this influence? So obnoxious had been that act, that for several years, all appeals made by the friends of that work to the Legislature, for assistance to complete the Canal, were met by a decided opposition, and it was declared that another cent should never be appropriated until that obnoxious law was repealed. From that time down to the present, that obnoxious law had remained unrepealed. And now, when a proposition was brought into this body to incorporate into the Constitution such a provision that these works could never again be used as party instruments, that the board should at all times be divided between the two parties, then an appeal was made to resist this change, because it was of a partisan character, and would interfere with party machinery.

Mr. DAVIS wished to call attention to the fact, that in 1839, the House of Delegates had passed a bill for the completion of the Canal, which had been defeated in the Senate.

Mr. SPENCER said that he was speaking of the effect of the act of 1840, which was passed after the time referred to. He was doing this to show that there was nothing in the present bill of a partisan character, while the bill contended for by the gentleman from Kent, was exclusively partisan. The gentleman from Kent, in reply to the remarks of the gentleman from Frederick, [Mr. Thomas,] had spoken of the impossibility of his declaring, with assurance, that he should never again serve in a political capacity, and had narrated an anecdote in relation to General Jackson in illustration. He (Mr. S.,) would say to the gentleman from Kent, that it was no easier for him (Mr. C.,) to understand himself, than for the gentleman from Frederick. If he had become convinced that this was a partisan movement, it would be well for him to reflect how easy it was for any man to be deluded by the influence of partisan feeling. The position which he [Mr. S.,] took, was that this partisan machinery now in the hands of the Legislature, should be taken from them. It did not follow that any gentleman was to be turned out. The present State's agents might as well be elected by the people of the State as any others, and would be likely to be so, if the people considered that their duties had been faithfully discharged. To say that in passing this bill would be to turn out the present State's agents, was to say that they could not stand the test of a popular election, and he would not assume such a position.

The gentleman from Kent had said that there were members here clamoring for retrenchment and reform; but who, when they came to act upon a question of reform, were found not to be

so good reformers as those who made less clamor. This was apparently intended to intimate that those gentlemen who had sought retrenchment and reform, were in this matter voting against their principles; while that gentleman was voting as a reformer and for retrenchment. And was there no retrenchment and reform involved in this proposition? Did gentlemen ask for retrenchment in an amendment declaring that these Commissioners should only receive \$200? The reform party in Maryland were opposed to unnecessary offices, to life offices, and to excessive salaries; but there was another principle of reform, which was to pay the public servant according to his labor. The reform party were guilty of no meanness. They were at all times willing to pay an adequate salary to any officer of the government. His bill proposed in the first place to introduce reform by making the office one of election by the people; to enable the people to elect officers to have charge of the works, upon the good management of which the whole system of taxation depended. Was not this reform? Was it not better that the people should have this power, rather than the Legislature? What would be the effect? At present the great mass of the people of the State were almost in entire ignorance as to the management of these works. How many are there who do know who is the President or who are the Directors of any one of them? But if the bill should pass, and the candidates should be brought before the people for this office, then the State works would be brought in review. The people would be made acquainted with their details and their management, and would know whether the power was properly or corruptly used. The parties being divided upon the Board, if that which should be in the ascendancy should deviate in the least from the strict line of right, the other party would be sure to expose the machinations, and the people would take cognisance of them.

He would ask the gentleman from Kent, with all sincerity, whether he (Mr. C.) had given any evidence of the notions of reform, by which he judged those favorable to this measure, when he charged them with being professed but not real reformers? Upon what bill which had come before the Convention at any time, had that gentleman shown an interest in reform which would authorize him to judge those who professed to be reformers?

The gentleman from Prince George's, the mover of this proposition, (Mr. Tuck,) had asked why gentlemen should refuse to support an amendment limiting the salary to \$200, when the very same Commissioners now perform the same duties for \$100? Did it follow that because one set of men were improperly paid, their successors should receive either too much or too little? His doctrine of reform was, that if any public officer received too much for his labor, his salary should be retrenched; but if he received too little, he should be paid in proportion to his labor. If these Commissioners had been paid too little heretofore, he would be willing that their successors should receive a reasonable sum. But the