

Washington county to issue bonds, to raise money to build a Court House in said county, and appointing Commissioners in contract to erect the same, from which I felt constrained to withhold my approval.

The general provisions of the bill are, in my judgment, at war with the fundamental principle of local self-government. The Constitution, in Article VII., section 1, provides for the election of County Commissioners for each county, whose power and duties shall be "such as are now or may be hereafter prescribed by law." The 1st section of Article XXVIII. of the amended Code of Public General Laws, declares, that "the County Commissioners shall have charge of and control over the property owned by the county."

The Constitution and the laws now in force, place the "grounds owned by Washington county," on which the Court House, recently destroyed by fire, was erected, in the possession and charge of the County Commissioners, elected by the people, while this bill directs that the new Court House shall be erected by persons, not chosen by the people of that county, but appointed by representatives from other localities, who have no local interest in Washington county, and are to contribute no part of the money to be expended in the erection of the building. It is time that the difficulty arising from the attempt to oust the constitutional custodians of the county property, is supposed by the framers of this bill, to be met by a *quasi* repeal of that part of the 8th section of Article XXVIII. of the Code, above referred to (so far as it applies to Washington county,) by the 13th section of this bill, which repeals that part of the 8th section "*until the Court House, to be erected under the provisions of this Act, is completed;*" but this is an anomaly in legislation.

Who is to determine, when the Court House is "completed," and when the County Commissioners are to resume control of the county property?

There may be one or two precedents for this sort of legislation, but in my judgment, it is a practice which would "be honored more in the breach, than the observance."

The provision also which directs that the bonds to be issued, shall bear interest at the rate of *seven per cent.*, seems to be in conflict with section 57, of Article III., of the Constitution.

That section provides, that the "legal rate of interest *shall be six per cent. per annum,*"—of course this means the rate of interest over the whole State, and the subsequent clause—"unless otherwise provided by the General Assembly," evidently has reference to the same rate of interest for the whole