

tion from the proceedings, or debates of any one of the four independent legislative bodies, by whom it has been adopted. And, if the grave and solemn movements of the several legislative bodies themselves, by whom it was passed, cannot be considered as altogether safe guides in ascertaining its meaning, most assuredly the resolutions of the various assemblages of people, who have met at sundry times to consult about 'this great enterprise,' with all the unofficial sayings and doings in relation to it, which have been so much pressed upon the attention of the court, must be utterly rejected, as absolutely unworthy of any the slightest respect or attention whatever.

It would be of dangerous consequence to admit parol proof of an intention in the law makers, different from that manifested by the words of the law itself; as to shew, that a duty which the act of Assembly called a *port duty*, was intended to be a *fort duty*. (*m*) In construing a legislative enactment, a court of justice cannot regard the resolutions, orders, or propositions entered upon the journals of either branch of the legislative department; but must look to the statute book alone, the words of which must speak for themselves; nor can it consider the motives which may have influenced the legislature any further than they are manifested by the language of the statute itself. A judge must form his judgment of the meaning of the legislature as if the case had been brought before him by demurrer, in the consideration and determination of which no evidence can be admitted; yet, in all such cases he may well inform himself from dictionaries or books which treat on the particular subject; in doing so, however, such authorities are not to be regarded as mere evidence, but only as the grounds of his judgment, as if he were to cite authorities illustrative of the opinion he delivers. (*n*)

The provisions of the act incorporating *The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company*, upon the true construction of which the present question turns, relate only to the termination of a great work which that corporation is to cause to be executed; and the matter to be decided is, where that termination was intended to be; or whether that body politic has been restricted to any given space or

---

(*m*) By the king in Council on rejecting Lord Baltimore's claim of certain Port Duties; Bacon's Law of Maryland, 1692, ch. 17, note.—(*n*) *The King v. Waddington*, 1 East 148, 158; *The Attorney-General v. The Cast Plate Glass Company*, 1 Anstr. 39; *Cameron v. Cameron*, 7 Cond. Chan. Rep. 374; *The people v. Utica Insurance Company*, 15 Johns. Rep. 380, 394.