

spection of the public funds in his hands. This plan of giving authority to the comptroller from one source; and to the treasurer from another, was to make them, in a measure, independent of each other, and thereby lessen the danger of collusion.

The constitution of 1851 provided for the establishment of an office of "Commissioners of Public Works." Such an office had been long deemed a necessity, but no provision had been made for its establishment. The control of the State over works of internal improvement had been exercised previously by a board of directors, appointed by the General Assembly. An act of the legislature in 1832 required the governor, with the consent of the council, to appoint three agents to represent the State at the meetings of the stockholders of all joint stock companies "incorporated to make roads and canals, and vote according to the interest of the State."⁵³

In 1840 the number of the board of directors for the State was increased to five. The power of appointment was taken from the governor, and given to the General Assembly. The directors were required to keep a journal of the proceedings of the stockholders in their general meetings, and report the same to the legislature.⁵⁴ It will be noticed that these commissioners were appointed to represent the State as one of the stockholders, and to cast the vote of the State in proportion to the amount of stock held by the State.

The office of commissioners of public works as established by the constitution of 1851, consisted of four members, who were elected by popular vote for a term of four years. One of the commissioners was to be taken from each of the four districts into which the State was to be divided for that purpose. The first district included the counties of Allegany, Washington, Frederick, Carroll, Baltimore and Harford. The counties of Montgomery, How-

⁵³ Act 1832, ch. 318.

⁵⁴ Act 1840, ch. 155.