

crowned with the most gratifying success. No one desired more than he, to see it enjoying that standard of eminence to which its usefulness entitled it, and would ultimately place it, if improvident or partial legislation did not interpose its sectional feeling, to disturb the harmony that should characterize the entire system. The proposed amendment, he thought, would not meet the objects claimed for it by its immediate friends; it was of very questionable utility; and he, therefore, preferred to have the merits of the whole subject discussed and disposed of, when the report of the committee on education, (now on the desks,) should come up for consideration. That, he conceived, with great deference to the opinions of others, to be the appropriate time to secure to educational purposes, the necessary constitutional safeguards, as well as to obtain a more equitable distribution of the present and prospective munificence of the State. He would observe, that under existing laws, Baltimore city did not enjoy her fair proportion of the school fund, and it was to protect her in the future, that he objected to the amendment of the gentleman from Montgomery, which, to his mind, looked rather to a perpetuation, than to a reformation of existing abuses.

Mr. S. referred to the progress of public schools in Baltimore city, from their origin to the present period, compared the annual expenditures incurred for tuition in the several cities, and alluded, in terms of commendation, to the last annual report of the school commissioners of Baltimore, in which he found interesting data to encourage the friends of popular education here and elsewhere. He earnestly declared that he never could be found refusing his aid, whenever legitimately demanded, to a system that had proved itself, under all disadvantages, so admirably adapted to the cultivation of the mind, and so essential to the preservation of the moral, social and political happiness of the whole State. He would add, for himself, and in behalf of his colleagues, that if gentlemen inferred from the vote they should give on this proposition, that they were opposed to general education, they will have drawn an erroneous conclusion. So far from opposing, their opinions ran in a contrary direction. They were firm as any could be in their determination to extend the benefits of education, and to secure an equality of rights to all.

The question was then stated to be on the adoption of the amendment of Mr. DAVIS.

Mr. DAVIS asked the yeas and nays, which were ordered.

The roll was called.

Before the decision was announced,

Mr. SOLLERS rose and asked if it was in order for him now to assign his reasons for the vote he had given?

The PRESIDENT said it was not in order.

Mr. SOLLERS then said, he must ask the unanimous consent of the Convention to say a few words.

The PRESIDENT put the question, and the Convention gave its unanimous consent, that Mr. SOLLERS should assign his reasons for his vote.

Mr. SOLLERS desired permission to explain the vote he was about to give, for without such explanation it might possibly be misconstrued. No man desired more sincerely than he did, to see every child in the State educated, for it never could be too often repeated, that upon the virtue and intelligence of the people depends the perpetuity of our institutions. But at the very moment when we are restricting the Legislature in every possible way to prevent the contracting of debt for works of internal improvements, at the very moment when we are interposing constitutional barriers to protect the people from mad and ruinous schemes, a proposition is introduced which grants to the Legislature the unrestrained, unlimited, indefinite right to contract any amount of debt for purposes of education, and to establish any system no matter how gigantic, embracing the establishing and endowing of colleges and academies in every county in the State. Said Mr. S. I am opposed to all this, he wanted something tangible to act on; he did not want to act in the dark. Whenever the revenues derived from the works of internal improvement, about which we hear so much shall be sufficient to the establishment of public schools, he desired their application to that purpose; but until the public debt was entirely discharged and until we had a fixed and certain revenue, he was opposed to all schemes, which might in any possible way again involve the State in debt.

The result of the vote was then announced as follows:

*Affirmative.*—Messrs. Chapman, Pres't., Blackstone, Dent, Hopewell, Ricaud, Lee, Chambers of Kent, Mitchell, Donaldson, Dorsey, Wells, Randall, Kent, Weems, Merrick, James U. Dennis, Crisfield, Dashiell, Hicks, Hodson, Goldsborough, Eccleston, Bowie, Sprigg, McCubbin, Bowling, McMaster, Fooks, Biser, Davis, and Kilgour—31.

*Negative.*—Messrs. Sellman, Sollers, Bell, Welch, Chandler, Ridgely, Lloyd, Colston, Chambers, of Cecil, McCullough, Miller, Spencer, Grason, George, Thomas, Shriver, Gaither, Annan, Sappington, Stephenson, McHenry, Magraw, Thawley, Stewart of Caroline, Hardcastle, Gwinn, Stewart of Baltimore city, Brent of Baltimore city, Sherwood of Baltimore city, Presstman, Ware, Schley, Fiery, Neill, John Newcomer, Michael Newcomer, Weber, Hollyday, Slicer, Parke, Ege, Cockey, and Brown—42.

So the amendment was rejected,

Mr. SPENCER moved to amend said amendment by striking out all from the word "dollars," in the ninth line to the word "but," in the thirteenth line, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"But the Legislature shall not contract any debt for the use of individuals, associations, or corporations, except for public schools, and then only to the extent and in the manner that may be provided for in this Constitution."

Some explanations as to the construction of the amendment passed on the part of Messrs. SPENCER and SOLLERS.