

mine by lot, who of their number shall hold their offices for        years respectively, and thereafter there shall be elected as aforesaid at each general election of delegates, two commissioners for the term of        years to be taken from the district respectively wherein the commissioners resided at the time of their election, whose term of service has expired, and in case of a vacancy in the office of either of said commissioners, by death, resignation or otherwise, the Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall fill the same until the next general election, and in case of an equal division in the board of said commissioners, on any subject committed to their charge, the treasurer of the State shall have power, and shall be called upon to decide the same.

Mr. DAVIS said he should like to hear from gentleman who proposed this Board of Public Works, the powers they proposed to invest in the Board, and the duties to be required of it. He saw from the bill before the Convention a considerable paraphernalia—a great deal of space devoted to the mode of election, and the location of the members of the Board, but very little as to their duties and powers. These appear to have been of secondary consideration, and are left extremely vague and uncertain. He should like to hear from gentlemen, what the Board is to do, and where it is to obtain and how to exercise the authority to perform the duties expected of it.

Mr. JENIFER said, if his friend from Montgomery would have a little patience he would give him the information desired. He would however first state that the report he had made, proposing to constitute a Board of Public Works, which was now under consideration, was not entirely according to his views of the subject. Several propositions had been referred to committee No. 14, of which he (Mr. J.) was chairman, none of which did he and the committee generally concur in, and the present report was made by him, as coming nearer to the views of the committee than any other; and it was understood that no member of the committee was pledged to the support of this particular plan. Mr. J. said the question of a Board of Public Works was not one to which he had devoted much attention, because there were other members of that committee more experienced and familiar with the subject than himself. He had therefore left the question more to the consideration of the distinguished gentleman from Cecil; the learned gentleman from Anne Arundel, (Mr. Dorsey;) and his friend from Queen Anne, (Mr. Grason,) two of whom have had much to do with the internal improvements of the State. The report therefore came before the Convention, more to discharge a duty which the committee felt devolved on them by the reference of several plans to their consideration, than from any predilection of their own. The question was now before the Convention to alter, amend, adopt or reject as may be deemed proper.

Now, in reply to the inquires of the gentleman from Montgomery, (Mr. Davis,) Mr. J. said

he would refer him to the messages of the late Governors of Maryland in relation to these public works, and he did not know how he could better satisfy his friend and other members of the Convention of the propriety and expediency of some such board, than by calling their attention to the messages of Governor Pratt, and Governor Philip Francis Thomas to the Legislature during their occupancy of the Gubernatorial chair:

In his message of December session, 1846. Governor Pratt calls the attention of the Legislature to the importance of having "an agent or a board of agents," to superintend the public works to which their "entire energies and time" should be devoted. Governor Pratt, as afterwards Governor Thomas, seems to have come to the conclusion that some board should be established, whose whole attention should be devoted to the subject, which cannot be expected from gentleman who are called on to make personal sacrifices, as is the case at present, by the gentlemen who have meritoriously accepted and now discharge the duties of State agent, or board of managers, without compensation—not even their expenses paid. Give an ample compensation to such gentlemen, as you now have acting as agents or managers, and there might be no necessity for a board of public works; but at present the State expects every thing, and gives nothing.

Mr. J. here read from Governor Pratt's message and said he would direct attention especially to the following paragraph, which would be found on page seventeen of his message, December session, 1846:

"Gentlemen, if you were placed individually in relation to those works, precisely in the situation which the State occupies, with the same power and control over them, and were now assembled to act for yourselves, personally, you would establish such regulations for the government of each work, as would in your opinion most increase the revenue from all. You would not entertain the Utopian idea, (upon which the action of the State appears to have been based,) that because this vast outlay had been made by you, that it required no supervision; nor the equally fallacious opinion, that you could procure agents of capacity and energy adequate to the supervision of so vast an interest who would bestow the constant attention and labor, necessary to the successful management of such a trust, without compensation. You would appoint an agent or a board of agents, to superintend and enforce the execution of the regulations established by you, with such compensation as would command the entire energies and time, of the agent or board appointed by you. All I ask, on behalf of the people, is that you act for them, as you would act for yourselves."

Here, [said Mr. J.] was a recommendation to the Legislature to establish a "Board of Public Works," or if you please call it by any other name, the members of which to be paid a fair compensation, and to devote their whole "energies and time," to the interest of the State. In the progress of time, the Legislature not having acted upon these recommendations, the late Go-