

indispensable to a general system of education. He hoped the convention would be led away by no such fallacious and sophistical argument as the gentleman from Frederick had just presented.

Mr. SMITH asked leave of the House to submit some facts in connection with this subject.

Mr. GWINN objected.

The question was then taken on the motion of Mr. RIDGELY, to postpone the further consideration of this report indefinitely, with the following result:

*Affirmative*—Messrs. Ricaud, Lee, Sollers, Howard, Buchanan, Bell, Welch, Ridgely, Lloyd, Sherwood, of Talbot, Colston, John Dennis, McLane, Bowie, Sprigg, Spencer, George, Wright, Thomas, Shriver, Gaither, Biser, Annan, Sappington, Stephenson, Nelson, Thawley, Stewart, of Caroline, Harcastle, Gwinn, Stewart, of Baltimore city, Brent, of Baltimore city, Sherwood of Baltimore city, Ware, Neill, John Newcomer, Harbine, Hollyday, Cockey and Brown—40

*Negative*—Messrs. Morgan, Blakistone, Dent, Hope, ell, Chambers, of Kent, Donaldson, Dorsey, Wells, Weems, Dalrymple, Bond, Brent, of Charles, Jenifer, Chandler, Dashiell, Williams, Hicks, Goldsborough, Eccleston, Phelps, Miller, McCubbin, Bowling, Dirickson, McMaster, Hearn, Fooks, Jacobs, McHenry, Carter, Pressman, Schley, Fiery, Michael Newcomer, Davis Kilgour, Waters, Anderson, Weber, Fitzpatrick, Smith, Parke, Ege, and Shower—44.

So the Convention refused to postpone indefinitely.

Mr. FIERY then moved to amend said report by striking out after the word "Legislature" in the second line, these words, "so soon as the financial condition of the State shall justify it;"

Mr. F. confessed that he had looked upon this great question, as one of the most important for the action of the House. He had witnessed the efforts to postpone it, to smother it in its infancy, and that, too, by some of the most distinguished gentlemen upon this floor. His object in making this motion to strike out, was to bring the subject immediately before the Legislature of the State. He would not have it deferred one single moment after its next meeting. He had acted uniformly as a rigid economist, and here he would say, that he would be willing to appropriate equally with any individual for the education of the masses of the people of the State. This was the manner in which he desired to see the public money expended. They had lavished vast sums of money for the construction of railroads and the completion of canals, and they had neglected the mass of the people. They had extinguished gradually, the spark which they should have, by all means attempted to foster by a general system of education. He had not time now, to lay down any general plan, nor would he have the presumption to attempt it; but he sincerely hoped that if no other good should result from this discussion, it might bring the subject before the people of the State.

The gentleman from Allegany had spoken of

his county, and he, (Mr. F.) presumed that it was the case in many counties—indeed, if he were to judge from some circumstances which had occurred here, he would fear that the schoolmaster had not been abroad in this body. He would refer to some of the Northern and Middle States, who were worthy of our imitation. Look at Massachusetts and Connecticut, where the townships were divided, and every one supported its own schools. There was nothing to render this impracticable in this State. He believed that some system could be devised to educate every child in the State. He desired that they should lay down some general principles, that the Legislature might act upon these principles, and that they would not stop until they had voted a general system of education throughout the State. He would have the appropriations made for the education of the youth of the State, from the revenue that would be derived from the public works. Let that become a common school fund, and he would not have one foot more of internal improvements of any kind in the State, until they had devised a uniform and efficient system of education for every child in the State. If it was the last word he had to say, he would say, let us have an efficient system of education.

Mr. RIDGELY said, that the gentleman from Washington county had thought proper to put those who voted for an indefinite postponement in a position, which he, for one, did not wish to occupy. He, (Mr. R.,) professed to be as good a friend of education as any member of this body, and was willing to go as far as any member to advance that cause. But it must be apparent that the position which the bill was made to occupy, by the amendment adopted on the motion of the gentleman from Montgomery county, (Mr. Davis) put members from the large counties in a position where they could not consistently vote for the proposition. They had succeeded in striking out that part which contemplated the application of the existing school fund to the cause of general education, and had thrown it back in the position which it was made to occupy by the constitutional amendment offered by the gentleman from St. Mary's, [Mr. Blakistone.] Thus we were called upon to establish a system of common schools prospectively, to be supported by a common tax to be levied upon the people, while the existing school fund was to be divided, as now provided by act of Assembly, to wit: one-half equally among the counties, and the other half according to the white population. This large fund of sixty thousand dollars was to be distributed in a ratio, unequal and unjust to the large counties, and then the common school system, was to depend exclusively upon a prospective fund to be raised by taxes to be levied uniformly. Now, what security had we that the Legislature would not distribute that tax, as the present school fund, was apportioned; that the Legislature, under the provisions of the proposition of the gentleman from St. Mary's, which compelled them in good faith to carry out all the existing laws on the subject, would not regard it their duty to carry out existing laws, touching this