

best terms which may be obtained for the same." That, by proper construction, must mean "other works" than the Washington Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and cover all the other works of internal improvement in the State. I move to reconsider, in order that the language may be so changed that it shall mean what the gentleman from Baltimore county designed it to mean. I think gentlemen will see that the language is open to the objection I make.

Mr. RIDGELY. I do not think the section is liable to that criticism. It will be observed that the section refers to three classes of public works; first, that class of public works is to be sold, the proceeds of the sale of which can be converted into a like amount of the public debt. All others, the proceeds of the sale of which cannot be converted into a like amount of the public debt are to be sold for the most that can be obtained for them. The first class is that which can be sold for a corresponding amount of the public debt, and they are to be sold and the proceeds so applied, the Washington Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad excepted. All others that cannot be sold for a corresponding amount of the public debt are to be sold for the most that can be obtained for them. Nevertheless, if the language be taken to be obscure I am perfectly willing that the section shall be so amended as to be free from all obscurity.— But I do not think it is necessary to reconsider it for that purpose. A proposition may be offered which will attain the end without reconsideration. I think the phraseology of the amendment is sufficiently clear.— I think it is free from the ambiguity and obscurity ascribed to it by the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Stockbridge.) If not, I have no objection to any amendment that will make it so. But I think if we once get this section reconsidered, we shall have to review all the ground which has been gone over in this debate. The proposition of the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Thomas) and the proposition of the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) will then come up for consideration. The whole ground is reopened, and the house has to pass over the same course of debate occupied on last Saturday, and which consumed the whole day.— If the proposition is not reconsidered, all these propositions are necessarily rejected. I notify the house that that will be the state of things. If there is a majority of the house in favor of the proposition I had the honor to submit, if there is a majority of the house in favor of confiding this trust to the governor, comptroller and treasurer of the State, instead of devolving it upon the legislature, as most of these other propositions do, I warn them that if the question is opened by a motion to reconsider, we have that subject before us again, and we shall have to rehearse the arguments indulged in on Saturday last touch-

ing the advisability of conferring the power upon the legislature. It seems to me that my friend from Baltimore city can attain his end of perfecting the section at some other period, when we come to the third reading of this bill, if there shall then be deemed to be obscurity in the last clause of this section, it can then be freed from ambiguity without involving us in what appears to me to be the probable condition of things upon a reconsideration.

Mr. THOMAS. For the very reason given by my friend from Baltimore county (Mr. Ridgely,) I am in favor of the reconsideration of that vote. I confess, so far as I am concerned as one of the representatives of Baltimore city, I am opposed to every proposition which has been offered for the sale of the State's interest in the public works. The proposition which I offered yesterday, I offered for the reason that I thought it was the best I could do, if the convention has made up its mind to sell the State's interest in the different public works within the State, including canal stocks, bank stocks, &c. I feel as deep an interest in the welfare of Baltimore city as the people of Western Maryland do in the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. If the people of Western Maryland feel such an interest in the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, that they are unwilling that we should part with a dollar's worth of our interest, I will tell them that the city of Baltimore has an interest of more than eight millions of dollars in the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad company; and my fear is that if the State's interest gets into the hands of private stockholders, the eight millions of dollars of Baltimore city will be lost and her trade and business ruined.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE (interposing.) I will suggest to my colleague that the question before the convention is reconsideration.

Mr. THOMAS. It is for these reasons, to test the sense of the convention, and to appeal to the justice of the convention in a thorough discussion of the subject, that I desire the question again to be opened. Suppose it takes a day to settle it. There are millions upon millions of dollars involved in this thing. Twenty-four hours is a very short time to dispose of the State's interest in these public works. Give us a chance before the thing is disposed of, to put ourselves on the record, so that we can show hereafter what position we take in relation to this subject.

Mr. STIRLING. It seems to me that there is an additional reason for reconsidering this. It seems to me that the meaning of the first proviso is liable to doubt. It says: "Provided, however, that the power hereby conferred shall only be exercised when the proceeds of such sales can be converted into a like amount of the public debt." That seems to me to mean an amount of the public debt equal to the proceeds of such sales. The idea I supposed the gentleman to intend to arrive