

cities and counties have a reversionary interest in it; and as soon as the debt is paid they become the distributors of its revenue. And who shall have the benefit of that increase? The State of Maryland and its people who have borne heavy taxation for twenty or thirty years, or some private stockjobbing corporation, that has never paid one cent of the taxes, but which sees an opportunity for a great investment, a magnificent speculation at the cost of the people of Maryland, and who are now anxious to get it into their hands? If it is going to increase, let the people of Maryland who have paid for it, and who have borne heavy taxation for thirty years, have the benefit of that increase.

There is no reason why we should take hurried action in this matter. I see clearly that we are going to array against us thousands of men, whose convictions I have very faintly attempted to utter, and whose interests are all embarked in this matter. I should prefer greatly to see this whole section as it stands here stricken out, and the old one continued, continuing the State's interest, and giving to the counties and cities their reversionary interest. If there is nothing to be made you may be sure that private stockjobbers are not going to buy. They have counted the cost; they know all about it. If they have made up their minds that this property is not going to be enhanced in value, they will not become the purchasers of it, and if it is going to enhance in value, then let the people have the benefit of that increased value. I say, therefore, in view of all these considerations, I shall vote very heartily against the sale of the State's interest in these public works.

Mr. RIDGELY. I have but a word or two to say, and shall only propose to answer one single view which has been taken by the gentleman from Howard (Mr. Sands.) I take it for granted that his objection to this proposition confines itself exclusively to that part which refers to the sale of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, with other works comprehended within what might be termed the second branch of the proposition reported by the select committee. The first branch is not obnoxious to his criticism, for the reason that it does not propose to sell any interest whatever, but merely to exchange the State's interest in the Baltimore and Ohio railroad company, for an equal amount of the bonds or registered debt now owing by the State.

Mr. SANDS. Will the gentleman allow me to ask him one question? What is the difference between stockjobbers, who want this interest, going into the market and buying a certain amount of the State debt and paying that over to the State, and paying so much in money to the State?

Mr. RIDGELY. There is no difference, because neither of those aspects of the case is contemplated. The proposition is to barter

or exchange the State's interest in that work for an equal amount of the State debt. There is no proposition to sell; simply a proposition to exchange the one for the other. So that his criticism does not affect the first branch of the proposition, but confines itself entirely to the second branch of the proposition.

But one argument which he used here to-day, with all respect to him, struck me as requiring any response. Most of the other arguments presented are speculative, and depend entirely upon a condition of things in the remote future which may or may not exist; when the stupendous increase in the value of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal shall become so great that it will be impossible to calculate it.

But I address myself to the argument employed by the gentleman, which has reference to circumstances as they are now. The argument is that if the State should part with its interest in the Chesapeake and Ohio canal company, it would involve the private interests of creditors to the extent of at least \$2,250,000; that the effect of that transfer would be to paralyze the interests of those creditors, destroy their claims, and virtually put an end to the vitality of all such claims. Now, I would ask the gentleman this question: If he were a stockholder in the Chesapeake bank of Baltimore, and were to sell his interest in that corporation, would that sale affect the interests of the creditors of that bank in the slightest degree, in any way or form whatever?

Mr. SANDS. I will answer the gentleman by an illustration. A gentleman who is now one of the wealthiest men in our county, told me that some twenty years ago he was on the verge of bankruptcy. He owned \$80,000 worth of stocks in some of the Baltimore banks. He had notes due there which must be met. He went to one of the banks and said—"you must let me have \$40,000." "But your notes are due here to-day to a large amount," was the reply. "I know they are," he said, "and I must have the money to meet them." He got the money, and instead of being to-day a broken merchant, he is one of the richest men in Maryland. Now if this canal is sold to-day, would not the liens upon the canal absorb all and more than all of the amount of the sales, and would these creditors get anything?

Mr. RIDGELY. How would that change the aspect of things?

Mr. SANDS. By keeping this work in the hands of the State for ten or twenty years, it may be able to pay not only all the debts which are liens, but all the others.

Mr. RIDGELY. I hope so. Unfortunately I have been a creditor of that canal of twenty years' standing, and I never expect to get one dollar. As for the creditors of the canal in