

West, was selected, which was, after diligent inquiries and sedulous surveys to ascertain the most practicable route, (I should perhaps say, the most *possible* route) it should be borne in mind that at that time, and up to this period, the difficulty of passing the range of mountain, which divides the waters of the Gulph of Mexico from those of the Atlantic at their sources, seemed to present an insurmountable barrier to *canal* navigation, to be accomplished by any funds the company were ever likely to be able to command. This insurmountable difficulty still stares the State in the face; and the Canal Company, after having availed itself of all the experience of the last five years, and of the intelligence to be derived from the whole circle of engineering science in the Contry, is still compelled to admit, as it has done in a recent memorial, that it must pretermit its canal for one hundred and ten miles of the great Western route, and resort to a rail road or some sort of "*portage*" for that portion of the route. It should also be borne in mind by the Legislature of Maryland, that when this canal was chartered, and when the liberal subscription was made by the State to that work, one of the leading motives, and I may say the great leading motive, was the confident expectation that by an expensive and difficult branch of this canal which should be made to lead to Baltimore, a large portion if not much the greater portion of the trade of this canal, would find its way to the ocean through that capital.

After this scheme had been projected and operations had been commenced under it, another scheme for constructing another artificial route to the west was gotten up, alleged by its projectors to be cheaper and more certainly practicable in its construction, and which gave certain promise that the trade which it might bring would not be left within the limits of a foreign territory, but would be safely and securely lodged in the lap of the commercial metropolis of the State, and thus realize the great desideratum so much desired by the people of the State, and for which they were willing to make such liberal sacrifices. To these ends, and for these purposes, was the rail road company chartered, and a liberal subscription to that work also made.

It will be no part of the invidious duty of your committee to attempt to enlighten the General Assembly by instituting a comparison of the advantages of rail roads over canals, or canals over rail roads—to enter into a discussion whether it be better to travel at the rate of five miles or twenty miles the hour—whether the cost of the work done on either, or the rate of tolls be greater or less, or whether there be more permanency in one than the other, or wheth-