

had given a charter of incorporation, by which they prescribed terms that required of the company a canal of sufficient capacity to meet the wishes and the wants of the nation; and, with a full view of the expenses which must be incurred, had contributed a million of dollars, towards this great object. They knew the opinion of the distinguished engineer, then in the service of the Government, to which this subject had been specially delegated, and had listened to the expression of his deliberate judgment, that, independently of the commercial benefits which this work promised to bestow upon the community, the national and political advantages which it held out, ought to secure to it from the public treasury, all the means necessary to its completion; and that without reference to its political consequences, the commercial and pecuniary results which must flow from it, would alone render it the most profitable investment which the Government could make of its means, independently of any returns in the shape of tolls. They looked to the Government of the United States as the only constitutional guardians and protectors of the District of Columbia, where this canal was to terminate; and they had reason to believe that, throughout this wide-spread empire, every citizen felt a deep solicitude in the welfare and prosperity of its metropolis. They regarded the United States as the proprietors of nearly a moiety of the real estate in the city of Washington, and as proportionably interested in every measure by which the value of that property could be affected. They viewed it as the owner of countless millions of acres beyond the mountains, the productions of which would be indefinitely enhanced in value by opening so ample a channel of communication with the waters of the Atlantic.

In every view they were able to take of the subject, with all the lights which their own intellects, or the most gifted men of the nation, could cast upon it, they perceived additional motives for Congress to grant all the means which might be necessary for the completion of a project, embracing such comprehensive interests.

Such your memorialists submit were among the most prominent causes which have induced the public authorities and private individuals in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia to embark, as they have done, in the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. Six years have elapsed since most of their subscriptions were made, and since they have been called upon either to pay the amount subscribed, or to