

mittee are enabled to state their impression that the navigation of the river has gradually been much improved since the time when it was thought impracticable to venture to navigate it in any manner with safety.

The first attempt to descend below Columbia with an ark, was made about twenty years ago, and since that time the difficulties have become less formidable as the experience and skill and numbers of the boat-men increased. There has been one great cause however which has prevented this channel of trade from being improved and fostered, for it has notoriously been left totally to provide for itself. Since that time the facility of wagoning produce to a market (principally to Philadelphia,) connected with the high price, compared with the present time, which our productions have borne for more than twenty years, rendered the cheapness of a conveyance to market of no great importance. But now, when the cost of transport of a barrel of flour from the interior, is in some cases equal to one half, or even three fourths of its value at the sea port from which it is ultimately exported, it becomes necessary for the farmers who are placed in that situation, either to abandon the growth of the article, or to seek out a CHEAPER mode of conveyance. The cheapest mode is undoubtedly by water, and where the circumstances seem to confine us to the improvement, at a small expense, of natural water courses, which will answer the purpose until a dense population and greater capital will justify the execution of a large and expensive work, your committee believe that every dictate of sound wisdom points out that moderate course.

The practicability of improving the channel of the Susquehannah at an expense comparatively small, has been much enforced; a numerous public meeting was held at Lancaster in August last, and a determination formed to prosecute the opening and improving the navigation of the Susquehannah from Columbia to tide water, and to petition the legislature of Pennsylvania for the appropriation of the necessary means to effect that object. The proceeding of the citizens of so respectable and important a section of the state, gives every reason to hope for a cordial co-operation on the part of our sister state, and the mutual advantages which will be derived from thus facilitating the conveyance to the ocean, of the productions of such an extensive country, must be felt by all its inhabitants. Their weight is great in the state councils, and mutual interest will produce mutual efforts to obtain the common end.

The produce of the Susquehannah is at present waded down the stream when the water is high in large arks, which are broken up and sold for a mere trifle when the voyage is finished. Until the last summer it appears that no boats ever attempted to ascend the river to Columbia, and the enterprise was at first declared to be impracticable. It appears however, from a report made to the citizens of Baltimore, by certain commissioners who were delegated on their part to attend the meeting at Lancaster, that in the course of the last summer, loaded boats were successfully brought up the rapids and falls of the river to the town of Columbia. From the same authority it would appear that the belief in the practicability of ascending the river in loaded boats was becoming so confirmed, that several boats were building for that express purpose, and persons preparing to pursue the regular business of transporting goods and produce on the river. The effort should be carefully cherished, and as the statements of all these persons concur, that from ten to fifteen thousand dollars would most essentially benefit the navigation, the aid thus required should be promptly afforded them.

Your committee have had an estimate put into their hands by the commissioners appointed by the citizens of Baltimore, from which it appears that about nine hundred and twenty five rafts of lumber, averaging each twenty five thousand feet, and five hundred and thirty five arks loaded with various productions of the country, have descended the waters of the Susquehannah to the Chesapeake during the present year. The value of this property at a fair estimate, although prices have been extremely low and sales unusually languid, is not less than one million one hundred and twenty thousand dollars. From the best information, it would appear that not more than one tenth part of the above sum is expended for return goods or otherwise, in Maryland, and that all the rest, forming the great mass, is remitted to Philadelphia or New York, to be laid out in goods and merchandize there. The establishment of a boat navigation up the Susquehannah, would secure the investment and expenditure of this large sum, amounting in the present year to a million of dollars, within the state of Maryland, and the reasonable profits on which, would increase the wealth and revenues of the state, and give employment to a number of her citizens, at the same time the improvement of the navigation would every year increase the quantity of produce brought down; the exports of Maryland would mount up; her revenue flourish in the multiplication of the objects of taxation; retailer's and ordinary licences be more productive, and an activity be given to the employment of capital which would naturally attract it to us from other quarters, and the benefits would be transferred through the whole state.

Your committee would add to these general arguments, that the city of Philadelphia is so fully aware of the great importance of the trade of the Susquehannah, that at various times they have projected canals to unite its waters with those of the Schuylkill. At the present time there is a company which have, at great expense, improved the Schuylkill, up to the town of Reading, with a view of leading a canal thence through the Tulpehaeken and the Swatara Creeks, to unite with the Susquehannah. Liberal aid has been given to this company by the state becoming the guarantee for the punctual payment of the interest on the stock for the term of twenty years. The work has been partly laid out, and the labor will be speedily commenced under the auspices of a wealthy and persevering community, stimulated by the keenest motives of self interest. Every motive therefore calls upon Maryland not to forego the eminent advantages which nature has put within her reach, nor to yield them up through a parcimonious economy, to the liberal expenditure of her competitor.