

Canal Convention. The estimate of the United States' engineers had been made for a canal, forty feet wide, and four deep; which dimensions were prescribed in the charter, and were amply sufficient for the purposes of Maryland. Though the actual cost of a canal of these dimensions, would have exceeded the estimate, it might have been completed to Cumberland, for a less sum than has already been expended upon the present work; and would have been now yielding a dividend to the stockholders. But under the auspices and influence of the General Government, it was determined to increase the width to sixty feet and its depth to six feet; to construct magnificent bridges, basins and aqueducts; and to make it a splendid national work.

When, however, the funds of the company were entirely exhausted, in constructing the work on this extended scale, it was discovered that no further aid was to be expected from the General Government, or Virginia, or the District of Columbia. The alternative was then presented to Maryland of completing the canal to Cumberland at her own expense, or of following the example of the United States, whose expected co-operation had first induced her to engage in the work. She had as little interest in completing the canal as Virginia, and much less than the General Government or the District cities. She had, indeed, no reason to expect any portion of its commercial benefits, without first connecting it with the city of Baltimore, by means of a lateral canal, as provided for in the charter; the additional expense of which was likely to be a full equivalent for its advantages. She has nevertheless, persevered in the work, as if it had been for her exclusive benefit, till her subscriptions and loans amount to seven millions of dollars. In presenting this statement of the relative interests and expenditures of the different parties, it is not intended to make a complaint. Virginia was engaged in other schemes of internal improvement, which were probably considered of greater importance. If the resources of Washington, Georgetown and Alexandria had been in proportion to their public spirit, or to their interest in the work, there is no doubt that they would have cheerfully borne their part of the burden which has fallen upon the State of Maryland. Unfortunately, however, they found it impossible, without ruining the people of the District, to pay their first subscriptions, and were under the necessity of petitioning Congress for relief. The General Government assumed their debt, and received a transfer of the stock for which it was incurred. In assuming this debt of the district cities, as well as in its original subscription to the canal, the General Government was probably influenced by a desire to improve the condition and gratify the wishes of those whom the Constitution had placed under its exclusive jurisdiction. Perhaps some obligation was felt, not only to embellish the seat of Government with its splendid edifices, but to make it a place of trade; to bring ships and commerce into its ports, and to fill it with an industrious population. It was also important to the Go-