

The new line of navigation would then, indeed, form a full and complete connexion "between the eastern and western waters;" which could be so effected in no other way. The naming of the steamboat clearly shews, that it was the intention of the legislators, by this law, to provide a mode of transportation from the one to the other of those two classes of vessels, which were then so profitably navigating the great rivers of our country. They intended, that the canal boat should be enabled to pass *over

165 the whole space, from the ship of the east to the steamboat of the west. It is not said, that the western termination shall be at the highest point to which a steamboat may go, but, "to the highest steamboat navigation;" that is, to the highest point at which such vessels usually go, and where they make their port. And so, as to the eastern termination, the canal boat is to meet a ship; but that kind of vessel is hardly ever found at the highest point of tide, to which she may go, but at the highest port. And therefore the canal must necessarily be extended down to the port; since the ship can meet and have intercourse with the canal boat no where else.

It is universally understood, that all canals, which have for their chief object the exportation of ponderous and cheap commodities, in co-operation with marine navigation, must be extended into the very port itself. But, in this instance, more is expected; and therefore, there is, if possible, an increased necessity for extending this canal into the very port. The greatest and most important political results, it is declared, are expected to flow from connecting, in this way, the navigation of the east with that of the west; and hence, it must have been intended, that the connexion should be made in the most complete and perfect form; that there should, if possible, be not the least break or interruption in any part of the whole line from the ship of the east to the steamboat of the west. Five miles of land transportation would cripple the intercourse most prodigiously; thirty miles of land portage would destroy the line of connexion totally.

Taken in this point of view, this law, by calling for a beginning of this canal "from the tide water of the River Potomac, in the District of Columbia," must be construed to have a reference to one, or to all of the three ports on that tide, at which the marine navigation ends. A different construction would confessedly allow of a termination, that might be greatly injurious, or even absurd; one which might mar the whole project, by stopping the great mass of ponderous canal borne commodities some miles short of their destination, there to be taken up and moved on again in another form. But it is manifest, from the nature of the subject provided for by this law, that the chief port of the District of Columbia must have been contemplated as the most suitable eastern termination of this canal. Whence this Court is perfectly satisfied, that