

transportation of arms is made easy, and the removal of soldiers, for the exigencies of government, so robbed of its difficulties and delays, that no reasonable fear can exist that the interest of the Government will long suffer for want of the power to support them. In all these varied respects, these works have contributed and will contribute, to the interest of the Union, in ways and to an extent to which human sagacity looks, in vain, to ascertain the limits,—it may be to the preservation of rights, the dearest to her existence, and to the executions of purposes the most magnificent that may await her destiny. It should be added, to justify the promises intimated of the gains to be derived from the completion of the canal, that its terminus being within the limits of the District of Columbia, if the boundless hopes which have allured the steps of past legislation, are to be realised to any extent, it may well be said that the territory of the Union should look to a more full participation than any other.

With these facts before us, it cannot be supposed that to seek the re-imbursement of the sum of \$72,000, will be regarded as inharmonious with justice and propriety, nor can it be readily supposed that the General Government will refuse to do what surely a high minded liberality would dictate to the individual, whose adversity had been relieved by another, when the tide of time had made the recipient capable to restore a mite of the favors conferred. If it be said that this is all true, yet a doubt is raised whether it would consist with a tone of elevated refinement to remind the recipient of the past, and ask to be restored some portion of former gratuity, the reply is, that Governments do not act with so nice a reference to scruples of delicacy, and least of all, the State Governments of this Union toward the parent Government. Or if there exist no difference in the abstract proposition as referring to individuals, and as embracing communities, precedent has certainly infringed upon the principle to a degree that leaves no doubt of the propriety (in a merely conventional view of the subject) of the demand in this instance. The precedents referred to are those of the State Governments, asking the General Government to distribute the proceeds of the sales of the public lands; or if this be not in point, because of a supposed right to the public lands, the asking the General Government to assume the debts of the State, questions upon which, however diversified opinions may be as to the constitutionality of granting the prayers, or of the policy and expediency, have never been opposed upon the score of delicacy.

So far, the report of your committee has proceeded upon the supposition that the grant of 1790 was a donation, and if it be so, they think that the preceding considerations will justify the resolution with which they propose to conclude their report. It admits, however, of another view, which, if the correct one, places the inquiry beyond all doubt. The language of the preamble and resolution which have been recited in their report, for the more clear exhibition of the subject of this inquiry, is “will advance;”