

It is delivered on board the boats in the tide-water canal, five miles distant, for one dollar additional. The middle sizes, it will be seen, will then cost twenty dollars at the point of shipment, and of these one ton will cover four hundred square feet. The smaller require rather more whilst the larger require less slate to a given area of roof. Small slates of an inferior quality are sold at lower prices.

There is no doubt that intercalations of roofing slate, with some interruptions, extend throughout the length of the talc slate (6) described in chapter III. I have noticed them in Montgomery and Frederick counties, and we may expect that further explorations will develop them in Baltimore, Howard and Carroll.

Near Hyattstown on the borders of Montgomery and, Frederick, a quarry has been opened, and produces excellent slate which is used in the neighborhood, but its proximity to the railroad should enable the proprietor to supply an export demand.

Two quarries of slate are now worked near Ijamsville in Frederick county. They are located upon the Baltimore and Ohio road about five miles eastward of the Monocacy, and fifty-three miles from Baltimore. They produce excellent slate, which will be even better at greater depth.

The prices of the Ijamsville slate as furnished me, are as follows: First quality, five dollars for 580 lbs., which covers 100 square ft.: second quality, four dollars for 620 lbs., which covers 100 square ft.

Slate of good quality is also quarried on the Lingamore in Frederick county, and supplies the local demand for that fine region of country.

Believing that the roofing slates of Maryland may be made a branch of productive industry, and of great moment to both town and country as a protection against fire, it was my desire and intention to have carefully examined the whole range and especially all the quarries now opened. I found it, however, absolutely impossible to do so without still further delaying the preparation of the report which I did my best to hand in on the first day of the session of the assembly.

They will be fully investigated during the next season.

Their importance to Maryland rests upon the following grounds:

1. In their use, as one means of protecting our houses against fire, and for which we are not dependent upon other states or countries.
2. Their value, as an article of export both to the south and west.

By means of our bay, rivers, canals and railroads, this heavy material may be distributed to almost every part of our own as well as many other states. So far as I can ascertain there is no good roof slate known or opened in any southern or western state on this side of the Rocky mountains. The geology of all of them forbids the hope discovering it, unless it be within a very narrow belt, ranging south-eastward through central Virginia and the western parts of North and South Carolina and Georgia, and terminating in the northern part of Alabama. If it should occur along this line there are very few points from which it could be sent, so as to compete with the Maryland slate, either on the sea-board, or in the western or south-western states.

We must bear in mind that the Maryland roof slates are nearer the Great West than any other upon or near railroads. As it is a heavy material, I would suggest to our railroad companies whether it may not be to their interest, as well as that of the public, to charge very low rates of freight on slate, by way of favoring an increased consumption abroad as well as at home.

The present appears to be a favorable time for inaugurating such a system, because of the dissatisfaction expressed by many in regard to the durability of metal roofing. It is more than probable, especially with reference to the exportation of slate to the West, that very low freights (for a time at least,) would stimulate the trader therein, so as largely to increase the trade, to furnish a considerable amount of freight to be taken to the Ohio in return cars that now go empty.