

general freely relinquish the whole of their stock without any compensation whatever; at all events, they are fully persuaded that Washington county will prove herself worthy of the immortal name she bears, and that her share of the road shall not cost the state one single cent, provided the rest of the road is also made free.

With regard to the rest of the road, your committee have two propositions to submit; and the first is— that if the whole of the road can now be obtained upon reasonable terms, (and your committee believe it can,) they would recommend the same to be purchased, and that one half of the amount be paid for by the state, and the other half by the city of Baltimore; and that stock be created by the state, redeemable at pleasure, and bearing an interest of per cent for her proportion. And in order to raise a fund sufficient to meet the payment of the said interest, your committee would recommend, that the state authorise the drawing of a lottery annually, to be called the Free Turnpike Road Lottery; and they would further recommend, that the auction duties continue to be received by the city of Baltimore.

The second proposition which your committee have to submit to the consideration of the house, provided the first does not meet with their approbation, is this: That the auction duties shall continue to be received by the city of Baltimore, provided she will purchase the whole of the road from Baltimore to Boonsborough, or from Cumberland to Conococheague Creek. Should either of these propositions meet with the concurrence and approbation of this honourable house, it must still be remembered, that there is an intermediate space to turnpike between Boonsborough and Hager's-town, on one route, and from Boonsborough to Stone Quarry Ridge, through Williamsport, on the other, in order to connect Baltimore with Wheeling.

To complete these roads, your committee think some plan might be devised, by which they could be finished at little expense to the state, as provisions of every kind are now at a low price; and the following, among others, is worthy of consideration: Let as many negroes and mulattoes as are now in confinement in the penitentiary, as may be necessary to finish the said road in one or two years, be put to work, under the direction of superintendants appointed by the state, allowing them however the choice of remaining in the penitentiary, or working on the road.

But there is still another question which presents itself to your committee, and that is, How is the road from Baltimore to Cumberland, or to where it crosses the Pennsylvania line about thirty two miles above Cumberland to be kept in good order.

And here also two modes of keeping the said road in repair offer themselves; the first is, that a certain number of toll gates shall be erected, where a toll sufficient to keep the same in repair, and no more, shall be collected. The second is, that a certain number of negroes now in the penitentiary, shall be allowed to serve out the remainder of their term of confinement on the said road, under the superintendance of persons appointed by the state, or by the levy courts of the several counties through which the road passes, and that all male negroes and mulattoes, hereafter taken up as runaways in any county of the state, shall be sent to work upon the said road, until they are reclaimed by their owners, or until they prove that they are entitled to their freedom; and should this not furnish a sufficient number, then let all male negroes and mulattoes who may be found guilty of any crimes now punishable by confinement in the penitentiary, be adjudged to labour on the road; and should the number be more than sufficient, they might be put to work on some other public road. This will, at the same time, be beneficial to the people of the state, both as regards internal improvements, and as it regards the penitentiary, which would then be exclusively kept for white persons, or female negroes.

There can be no doubt, that the period is not far distant, when the road from Baltimore to Cumberland must and will be made free; and an opportunity may never again occur, when possession of the same can be got upon such easy terms as they now can. Should the stock of these roads hereafter get into the hands of foreigners, or even into the hands of citizens of other states, the tolls which they have a right to demand under the charters of the several turnpike companies, would be found too heavy to be borne, and the consequence would be, that the trade, not only of a great part of the western country, but even of the upper counties of this state, would seek and find another course, and the state of Maryland might, when it would be too late, endeavour in vain to regain her present high and commanding station.

Your committee therefore recommend to this honourable house, the adoption of the following order:

Ordered, That the committee appointed to enquire whether ways and means cannot be devised to obtain the possession of the turnpike road leading from Cumberland to Baltimore, so as that the same, or part thereof, may be made a free road, be instructed to ascertain upon what terms possession can be obtained by the state, of the turnpike road from Baltimore to Boonsborough, of the road from Hager's-town to Conococheague creek, and of the road from Conococheague creek to Cumberland, so that the same be made free; and that they also endeavour to ascertain what aid will be afforded by the city of Baltimore in carrying this important object into effect.

All which is respectfully submitted.

By order,

R. BENNETT, Clk.

Which was read.

On motion by Mr. T. Kennedy, the question was put, That the same be printed? Determined in the negative. Ordered that the same have a second reading on Wednesday next.

The bill to continue the acts which would expire with the present session, was read the second time and passed.

Mr. T. Williams presents a petition from sundry inhabitants of Cecil county, praying for two public roads to Rock Run bridge over Susquehanna river; which was read and referred to Messrs. T. Williams, Archer and J. S. Moffitt.

Mr. Plater reports a bill, entitled, An act to regulate sales by public auction; which was read.

The house adjourns until to morrow morning 9 o'clock.

TUESDAY, December 19, 1820.

The house met. Present the same members as on yesterday. The proceedings of yesterday were read. The bill to continue in force the acts of assembly which will expire with the present session, and the resolution relative to the school fund for Calvert county, were sent to the senate.