

improvement for that river suggested in the bill reported by this committee in an earlier part of the session, and passed by both houses.

The advantages of transportation by water over the most improved methods of conveying produce by land, will always render the former the most important object of attention, and although the superior facility on the score of expense for making roads, may have a tendency to attract capital to that species of investment, yet this advantage is more than preponderated by the great proportion between the two in the expense, the labour, and the expedition of carriage, as well as in the bulk transported. There are many articles of produce whose size and weight, compared with their value and their distance from market, prevent them from becoming commodities of trade, so long as they are shut out from the means of water carriage; yet which with this opportunity, may form no inconsiderable portion of the internal commerce of the country; there are others also, which, although of a more convenient bulk, are entirely precluded from a low market, owing to the expense of transportation. In regard to such articles, the uncertainty of their becoming a matter of profit, induces a negligent culture and prevents them from arriving at that perfection which the activity of trade always communicates to an important staple. The difference of expense of transportation between roads and canals is generally estimated as 1 to 6, and that to 1 to 10 in favor of the latter. To this also may be added the convenience in regard to size and packing of the burthen borne. In Mr. Fulton's report to the secretary of the treasury in 1807, this subject is considered by him, and your committee would beg leave to make the following short extract by way of illustration: "I will now suppose," he writes, "a canal to have been cut from Philadelphia to Columbia, and its windings to make 100 miles, at 15,000 dollars a mile, or for the whole 1 500 000 dollars. On such a canal, one man, one boy and one horse, would convey 25 tons 20 miles a day, on which the following would be the expenses: One man, \$1; one horse, \$1; one boy, 50c; tolls for repairing the canal, \$1; tolls for passing locks, inclined planes, tunnels and aqueducts, \$1; interest on the wear of the boat, 50 cents;—Total \$5—This is equal to 20 cents a ton for 20 miles, and no more than one dollar a ton for 100 miles, instead of ten dollars paid by the road. Consequently for each ton carried from Columbia to Philadelphia on the canal, the company might take a toll of six dollars instead of one which is now got by the road, and the flour would arrive at Philadelphia for seven dollars a ton instead of ten, which it now pays." A little before the above extract, the same writer had given a calculation in regard to the road: "From Philadelphia," he observed, "to the Susquehanna at Columbia, is 74 miles; that road, if I am rightly informed, cost on an average \$6000 a mile, or \$444,000 for the whole. On it from Columbia to Philadelphia, a barrel of flour, say 200 weight, pays one dollar carriage; a broad wheeled wagon carries thirty barrels or three tons, and pays for turnpike three dollars; thus for each ton carried, the turnpike company receives only one dollar." This calculation, founded as it doubtless is, upon a careful and accurate consideration of the question, demonstrates at one view the immense importance of the subject, and places the superiority of canals in the most prominent light.

From this communication, your committee would turn to the subject of the roads, upon which it is necessary they should say but very little. From the hilly and broken character of a great part of this state, as well as the difficulty of procuring a sufficient supply of water at the summit levels, it must ever be necessary to substitute turnpike roads in many of the important districts, in the place of canals. To this species of labor, the public spirit of our citizens has been long since applied, and there is no state in the union more amply provided with excellent roads. The munificence of the general government, has in the space of a few years past completed one of the most substantial and best constructed turnpikes perhaps in the world, leading from Wheeling in the state of Virginia to Cumberland. This work is connected with other roads forming a communication with the city of Baltimore, and has become the route of a very extensive trade. The line of communication however is interrupted by a space of about ten miles between Boonsborough and the Caccocheague, which yet remains unprovided. It is indispensable that this piece of road should be instantly completed. Your committee however conceive it unnecessary to suggest any plan for this purpose, as they believe the fullest reliance may be placed in the efficacy of the measure already submitted and adopted by this legislature. It is understood that the citizens of the upper counties of Virginia have projected a scheme to shorten the distance between the city of Baltimore and Cumberland, by making a road from Shephard's town on the Potomac, to the last mentioned point. Should this enterprise be carried into successful operation, the diverging point would most probably be at Boonsborough. That circumstance however, your committee conceive, should have no effect in retarding the operations of the state in regard to the proposed work; as in any event it is a matter deeply interesting to a very extensive and populous part of the country who suffer at particular seasons of the year the most serious privations from the want of it.

While upon the subject of this road, your committee cannot withhold the expression of their desire to see some efficient arrangements made for the purpose of rendering the whole of this important line of communication free of toll, or subject only to such burthens as may be necessary to keep it in repair. The propriety of such a measure is urged by a multitude of considerations, which have been so frequently submitted to the legislature, as to make it unnecessary to repeat them; and such appears to be the general accordance of opinion upon this question, that it is believed nothing but a deficiency of means has prevented the purchase being made long since. Your committee merely throw out this topic for the consideration of the house, as connected with the objects of their report, without pretending to suggest any plan upon the subject. Connected with this also, is the subject of a bill now upon the table, for the purpose of authorising congress to impose a small toll upon so much of the Wheeling turnpike as extends within the limits of this state; the object of this bill your committee believe to be politic, and they would respectfully recommend its passage.

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