

thereon, the one originating in the senate, the other in this house, have been laid upon your table since the subject was committed to their consideration, to the justice of either of which reports, your committee cannot assent, but are convinced, that the errors and miscalculations in said reports, have arisen from a want of attention on the part of the authors, to the advantages of this river, fondly hoping, that nothing therein can be imputed to local or sectional feelings and prejudices. Nevertheless, your committee greatly regret, that so far as this river has been the subject of one, if not of both of said reports, the authors seem to have been in pursuit of difficulties and impediments to its improvement, rather than the means of making useful, a river so justly the pride of the state, and so anxiously looked to by the founder of our republic, not only as a source of wealth and importance to this state, but as a bond of union between the remotest points of this widely extended empire. In evidence of the difficulties attending the improvement of the Potomac, the committee of the senate have incorporated in their report, an extract from a communication made by Mr. Latrobe to Mr. Gallatin in 1808, as follows: "The trade of this canal, especially during the year 1807, has been so great, that there appears every prospect of its becoming a productive work in those years in which there is a considerable and equal quantity of water in the river; but on this circumstance it must always depend. The information respecting it which can be obtained from the company on the spot, renders it unnecessary for me to say more upon it." Your committee humbly conceive, that no stronger language could have been used in commendation of the improvements of this river then effected, than that used by Mr. Latrobe in the above extract. The committee of the senate, deeming it wise to print in italics a part of said extract, which is not italicised in the original, your committee will pass from it with this single remark, that with deference to the opinions of the authors of the report, we apprehend the utility of every canal will depend upon its being supplied with a sufficient quantity of water, for the transportation of the produce to which its geographical situation entitles it. Your committee have looked in vain for the doubts of the practicability of improving this river, contained in the above extract discovered and referred to by the committee of the senate, and insist that all to be inserted therefrom, is favorable to any just plan of improving the river that the legislature may in its wisdom adopt. If your committee were disposed to view this as a contest between those interested in the improvement of the Potomac, and others equally interested in the improvement of the Susquehannah they would find no difficulty in extracting from Mr. Latrobe's communication, the suggestion of numerous, real and almost insurmountable obstacles to the improvement of the Susquehannah. yet they hope those obstacles have been magnified in Mr. Latrobe's report, and recommend to the attention of the state this last mentioned river.

The improvement of the Susquehannah is an object of great importance, and will doubtless contribute much to the wealth of the state, but in the opinion of your committee, the greatest advantages resulting from such improvement, must be gathered by a sister state; yet we trust, that no feeling of selfishness will induce this state to delay useful and profitable improvements, because a neighboring state may participate in their advantages.

The Potomac, in the opinion of your committee, presents at this moment, the point where ought to begin the first operations of that spirit of improvement, now manifestly awakened in Maryland. It runs through a tract of country equal in soil and fertility to any in the habitable globe, and far surpassing any other, over which the state has jurisdiction or control. It is visited by numerous tributary streams, all of which pass through rich valleys, which promise to pour their wealth into this state when the high way shall be established through which nature intended it should pass.

We beg leave to present to the view of the house, the various creeks and rivers which contribute to swell the waters of this river, in its course from the Allegany mountains to tide water. It receives on the Maryland shore, Will's, Evert's, Town, Fifteen mile, Sideling Hill, Tanoloway, Licking, Conococheague, Antietam and Cotoctin creeks, and the river Monocacy; on the Virginia shore, the waters of the South Branch, the Great Cacapehon and Shenandoah rivers, and Patterson's, Little Cacapehon, Sleepy, Bark, Opicon and Goose Creeks flow into it. Most of these streams are now navigable in high water, and when the improvements contemplated in the Potomac shall be completed, an irresistible temptation to the improvement of the navigation of the above mentioned creeks and rivers will be offered to the states to which they belong.—From Cumberland to tide water, is a distance of 188 miles; and in this distance the river is said to have a fall of 735 feet. The Potomac passing from the west towards the east, through the mountains and ridges running from North to South, must necessarily become a rapid and rough stream, but its rapidity and the magnitude of its fall, so far from defeating, would minister to the purposes of an independent canal, cut by its side, from Cumberland to tide water.

That such a canal is not only practicable, but easily accomplished, your committee cannot conceive it necessary to report to an enlightened assembly, understanding the situation and interests of the state. The banks of the Potomac are in a great degree composed of alluvial land, and easily excavated. This circumstance of itself will greatly diminish the expenditure usually contemplated for works of this character and magnitude, but without this, canals are now constructed at one half of the expense heretofore supposed necessary; and the opening of a canal must at this day be attended with unusual difficulty, if it cost more than a turnpike road. Your committee have consulted the best advisers, and avail themselves of the best means of information, by which they could most accurately ascertain the probable cost of the proposed work, and they are convinced that a canal may be made from Cumberland to tide water, with two paths for the working of the boats by horses, for the sum of one million five hundred thousand dollars, including all works necessary to the complete formation of the canal.—In the discharge of the duties assigned to your committee, they wrote to John Mason, Esq. President of the Potomac company, requiring information upon certain subjects enumerated in said letter, and submitted to him the plan of improvement of the river proposed by your committee. That document marked (A,) accompanying this report, will