

it would have been proper to exercise this discretionary power the authority was not given to the Board. The charges for transporting passengers should be permanent and regulated by law and not regulated by the arbitrary discretion of any individual or temporary holding for the time being, the office of Chief Magistrate. If the transportation of travellers from Baltimore to Washington City is to be confined exclusively to the rail road, for the benefit of the State and the Stockholders of the Company it cannot with propriety be done by such temporary changes in charges as will compel Stage and Steamboat Companies to withdraw from competition with a return to high charges after all competitors are expelled. The Travelling public are seriously interested in this question and have a right to expect from the State the establishment permanently of such a rate of fare as is reasonable and will supercede just cause for a resort to other means of conveyance than those provided by the State through the medium of the Corporation fostered by the patronage and owing their existence to its laws.

Since June last no report has been received from the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company furnishing information as to its present condition or future prospects. It is believed however that within that period no such material change has taken place in its affairs as if communicated would assist the Legislature in deciding finally - and this most earnestly but respectfully urged upon the Senate and House to do so - what disposition shall be made of the very large interest of the State in that Corporation. Further postponement and delay on this subject cannot possibly be productive of good to any of the interests to be affected. For more than twenty years the State has been concerned with other parties in the undertaking to make a canal from tide water on the Potomac, to the coal fields and iron ore banks of Alleghany. For five years past the work has made very little progress. During this last period the interest due to the State, and of which it has received no part amounts in the aggregate to more than two millions of dollars. The Corporation stands heavily indebted to the amount of more than one million of dollars to individuals many of whom are in a state of extreme want and privation caused by the unjust withholding of their hard earned wages. I submit whether considerations of public justice and private morality do not require at the hands of the representatives of the people an early and just disposition of these claims.

If it shall appear that neither the credit of the State nor of the Corporation can be made available to set to progress at once to the completion of the Canal without numerous sacrifices to the credit of the Company would it not be advisable now to adopt decided measures to determine clearly the vested interests of Maryland in that Company? When that has been done by a foreclosure of the State's Mortgage the facilities for realizing our interest in the Corporation will be so far increased as probably to diminish