

Tumpikes. It is simply a piece of iron, or even wood, eight or ten inches or two feet long, and four or six inches broad, fastened to the cross bar or bobstee of the wagon, by a chain which is just of such a length that when the shoe is slipped under the hinder wheel, the chain prevents its falling farther back, and the wagon being in motion, the shoe is dragged on bearing the wheel upon it.

In constructing a road on a large ascent, care should be taken to make resting places at short intervals by carrying the road on a level for a few yards. The pauses for breath, which a team heavily laden requires on an ascent of any considerable distance, are very injurious when it is obliged to stop in the midst of the ascent and remain in full draught. To relieve the horses from the backward pressure, the wagoner blocks his wheels with large stones or billets of wood, from the side of the road, which of course he leaves on it - and when the team sets off again, the horses of ten become restless from having to start in full draught, and lose their strength and spirit under the control of the whip. A staff of wood attached by a staple to the hinder axle tree, and about a foot longer than the height of the axle from the ground, on which the end is suffered to drag, makes it unnecessary to block the wheels; but the inconvenience of setting off in full draught remains; and it is vastly better to construct the resting places at short distances on which the team will start cheerfully, and have more strength to overcome the next angle of ascent.

But the great scourge to a Tumpike road, is the narrow wheel, still in use, and on which great burdens are carried. The iron tyre of the narrow wheel wearing away on the edges, in a little time, presents a narrow convex edge to the road, and as but one point of the circumference of the wheel comes in contact with the road at any one time, the effect of a heavy pressure of thirty or forty hundred weight, carried on such wheels, may be readily conceived to sink in and cut up even the hardest roads. The incomplete state of the lines of Tumpike communication as yet, and the preference given to the narrow wheel for farm work, are perhaps the reasons why the broad wheel is but partially introduced. It appears, however, that some revision of the laws in this respect might be made, and a great reduction made in the toll on wagons of a certain breadth of wheel. In fact, when the breadth amounts to ten or twelve inches, (and on a good Tumpike they would run more easily than the narrow wheels) the wheels act as so many heavy rollers, and actually benefit the road more than the company could in any way do for the sum which they would receive as toll from any single wagon.

The tumpikes we have been considering have penetrated to different parts of the fertile Districts lying east and west of the Blue Ridge.

The road undertaken to be made by the banks, is one which strikes at a far more distant and greater country, and appears to be peculiarly the object of legislative care. It leads to Cumberland where the great national road over the Allegany mountains commences, and will form a part of the great chain of communication with the Western states. The national road is now