

suddenly gathered from the other ports of the union to the north or south of the Chesapeake. Nor could an union of these forces supply the deficiency of either, in a concerted attack, since the wind which blew in one of them from sea, would shut up the other in Hampton Roads. It would be otherwise with a squadron descending the bay. Combining, as it proceeded to the capes, with that in Hampton Roads, it would be carried, by the same wind, against the common enemy, who, if he quitted his station to intercept their union, would leave open the Chesapeake, and an enemy behind him, which the same breeze would bring upon his rear, reinforced possibly from the Atlantic.

If these, and many other considerations, shall prompt the Government, charged with the common defence, to construct suitable docks for the prompt construction and repair of ships of war, at some secure position on the navigable waters of the Chesapeake, higher up than Gosport, and to form, at such position, a great naval depot, none will be found more suitable, it is believed, or offering greater advantages, than the Potomac.

The prices at which the works upon the forty-seven miles, embracing much of the most difficult portion to construct, of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, have been contracted for, have placed its speedy accomplishment beyond the reach of any rational doubt. Its last feeder, drawn from the Potomac but ten miles above the Eastern Branch, will be of an elevation capable, if it be extended to the Navy Yard, in the mode which your memorialists recommend, and applied to the construction of suitable docks, of floating the heaviest ship of war above the height necessary for her construction or repair, without hazard or delay. When the western section of the canal shall be combined with its eastern, and the success of the one has ensured already that of the other, there will be opened from these docks and the water power formed in their vicinity, a channel which no enemy can close, to the mouth of the Mississippi. The contemplated canals from Pittsburgh to Lake Erie, and from New Orleans along the eastern shores of the Gulf of Mexico, will extend this inland water communication to all the extremes of the union. A comparatively short canal, one third of which has been recently ascertained to be of very easy construction, across the counties of Frederick, in Maryland, and Adams and York, in Pennsylvania, along the