

If aid for this object had not been solicited of your honorable body, under the authority of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company, by your memorialists, it has been because, as yet, they have not been able to decide definitively on the expediency of constructing a continued canal, or a railway, on the "middle section" (to use a denomination of the United States' engineers) of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, and because they have been desirous to furnish, by the actual construction of part of the eastern section of the canal, conclusive evidence that the whole can be made, on an enlarged plan, for a sum much less than that at which its cost was estimated, prior to the subscription to its stock by Congress of one million of dollars. By the next winter this evidence will have been supplied, through the operation of the contracts already formed for the completion of fortyeight miles of the canal, being all that part of the eastern section which has been left open to execution, by the unexpected interference of the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road Company, with the route laid down by the United States' Board of Internal Improvement for that section, and approved by an examination, by order of the general government, of the same route, by two eminent civil engineers of New York, Messrs. James Geddes and Nathan S. Roberts.

Your memorialists are aware that other routes may be designated for a railway from Cumberland to the river Ohio, at Pittsburg, besides that which may be chosen, after a thorough examination of the intermediate ground by the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company; but your memorialists are not allowed, by any reference to experience, to confide in the probable selection by the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road Company, of a route for their road which shall not interfere with the rights of this company, which are to "extend a branch canal up the Potomac, from Cumberland to the coal banks on that river, and to make a railway or canal from Cumberland towards Pittsburg, on any route they may please to select." It is from a sense of duty, and a sense of duty only, that your memorialists are obliged to say that no interference by that company with either of those rights would be more injurious than the steps which they have already taken to arrest the progress of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal on its twice designated route, along the valley of the Potomac river.