

the relative advantages of the two systems; and the one which the country should decide upon to be the best, could, and ought to be exclusively prosecuted."

And you further observe, immediately following the preceding proposition, viz.

"This suggestion was originally offered, and is now renewed, under the persuasion, that it can hardly be for the public interest, that two works of such magnitude, intended for the same precise object, and involving so large an expenditure, should be constructed for so great a distance, immediately alongside of each other, where one would answer all the requisite purposes, provided, that were the one best calculated to secure the object desired."

This is certainly a sound and judicious reflection, but, it would seem, that had it occurred, at the period of formation of the rail road company, it would *then* have been, to say the least, more appropriate. The charter for the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal company had then been obtained for several years. The preliminary surveys and estimates had been made. The route for the line of canal *designated*.—And all requisite measures to carry the object into effect, were progressive. It is true, that another more direct, and a very different route, was *then* proposed for the rail road; one which was estimated to save near, or quite, 140 miles of distance. If with this, besides other presumed advantages, the rail road company have chosen to abandon that route, and to fasten down upon that, which had been previously *surveyed* and *designated* for the canal, or, to plant their road alongside of it, upon the only route which the canal can pursue,—surely, the considerations, connected with this reflection, ought not to apply to this company; which is only pursuing the original plan and design, for which it was created.

With regard to your proposition itself, so far as depends upon the opinion of this board, it would have no hesitation to witness an experiment, upon a proper scale, that should fairly test the relative advantages of the two systems. But this test, we should suppose, on further reflection, you would be aware, is not attainable, "by extending our respective works to the point of junction," as proposed by you, and for this plain reason—that, from this point of junction, descending the river to Seneca falls, (a distance of thirty miles) although we may construct the canal, we can throw no water into it, for that distance. We can do this with advantage, only, at Harper's ferry.