

longing as this did, to its whole people, should be cast, so far as it depended on my action, not for the mere purpose of gratifying the transient feeling of ephemeral party association; but with a strict regard to vast and enduring public interests—as these might be impaired or cherished by its influence. I knew that quite one half of the members of the legislature of Maryland had opposed all grants of aid from its treasury to such works; and I apprehended, that their constituents would continue to elect persons entertaining the same opinions. To complete any of our great undertakings would require, the expenditure of large sums of money; and knowing that as society, accustomed to regard public expenditures as the measure of public burthens, soon or late to befall themselves, in the form of taxes, might not readily distinguish such expenditures, as are made for the ordinary support of government in peace, and the extraordinary expenses required to support them through the struggles of war; from mere outlays of capital in the construction of works yielding an income proportionate to their cost—whilst their use cheapens the expenses of conveying persons to and fro; and commodities from the producers to the consumers—and which, by reducing such charges, rateably add to the profits previously derived from their property and toil, by nine-tenths of our population; I could not expect that this view of the effects of our internal improvements, no matter how just it might seem to my mind, would soon find favor and acceptance, with the great body of the people. And my previous observation having taught me, that its truth would overcome the prejudices very slowly, from which their opposition arose; I regarded it as my duty to obviate, if I could, the necessity of any further resort being had to the Treasury of Maryland, for the purpose of completing the eastern section of this invaluable work: and I considered this course, even with relation to the well-doing of the party with whom I acted, as being most expedient and safe; as it might relieve them from the necessity of prosecuting the enterprise at the cost of the State, as they would have to do, under other circumstances, or be censured by its friends—to avoid which, if they granted aid, they would displease a large portion of their party, at all times adverse to such measures. Under such circumstances and reflections, I resolved to advocate the election of Mr. Eaton. To my colleague, Mr. Forrest, I made my intention known. He told me that he had been originally opposed to the election of Mr. Mercer, and that he still thought that Mr. Mercer ought not to be continued president of the company.

With Mr. Eaton I had not been personally acquainted, and I then merely knew him from public proceedings, and a short interview in which we were simply made personally known to each other, in the midst of a group of his acquaintances, all casually present and participating in our conversation, which was exclusively on subjects foreign to the proceedings and affairs of the canal company. Mr. Forrest knew Mr. Eaton but slightly—but had in their very transient intercourse, held some years before at