

APPENDIX.

and the ascent of the river being then *impracticable*, the returns by importation were made to Baltimore and other sea port towns on the Atlantic shores, and again from those great marts of importation were distributed to the consumer in the interior, and this branch of commerce found its only mode of conveyance across the rough and mountainous regions, towards the great valley of the west by *wagon power*. As the western wilds yielded to the enterprize and industry of civilized man and became settled and cultivated, so in proportion did Baltimore, (hitherto a mere village in comparison with Boston, New York and Philadelphia) spring forward into commercial importance, and grew with a rapidity only equalled by the rapidity with which emigration and cultivation spread themselves over the western wilderness; and she promised speedily to rival, if not outstrip her elder commercial sisters in their race to opulence and population. Her *advantages* in this noble competition were seen and felt to be chiefly, her closer contiguity to the great region beyond the mountains, the receivers and consumers of the fruits of importation by foreign commerce. Suddenly the application of steam power, (a discovery which it is yet to be proved, whether it be a blessing or a curse to mankind) on the Mississippi, produced a revulsi in trade, and threatened the Atlantic cities with annihilation and ruin. Their great back country was thereby about to be virtually cut off, or more properly speaking, the ascent of foreign goods was found to be more readily and more cheaply sent up by steam power from New Orleans, than by wagon power across a rough and mountainous region. The great state of New York was the first to take alarm at this condition of things, and to seek to avert its ruinous consequences by the prosecution of her great western canal, which was designed again to reconnect her with the west, the source of her commercial prosperity. Pennsylvania for like purposes eagerly embarked in a similar pursuit, and it was reserved for Maryland to follow the example of her more populous and wealthy sisters, or to sink under the ruin of her commercial metropolis and the consequent ruin of her agricultural prosperity. Thus situated, and with less population and less wealth; but with that shorter and perhaps better route still before her to the heart of the west, which had served her purposes under other circumstances, she again entered the lists of competition for an artificial route, with a heroic devotion and a spirit of enterprize and boldness which has commanded universal admira-