

path, they have lost sight of it, and gently curved the line to adapt it to the inflexions of the fast land.

This freedom of modification and alteration appeared to them necessary in a work whose position and circumstances, as might be expected, are those created under and subject to a few eternal laws of nature themselves, so varying, so almost opposite.

In order to show how these principles have been applied, the Commissioners cannot do better than to give a brief sketch of the present state of the Sounds, referring, if the assistance of a chart be with a desirable, to the Map of Virginia, where the best information hitherto existing on the subject has been expressed.

The ordinary way in which a vessel coming down the Chesapeake would go, if her port was either on the other side of the peninsula, or indeed any where to the east of the Chesapeake, would be to bear up around the Linen Bar, a shoal beyond Fisherman's Point, or Cape Charles; and then, if her especial destination be through the Sounds, to return as it were through Smith's Island inlet; if otherwise, by keeping away a little, she may readily stand out at once to sea. This course, however, it is not always easy to hold; and great desire has been expressed by the inhabitants for a nearer and easier connection of the sounds with the Chesapeake. A careful examination has shown the existence of a channel between Fisherman's Point and the Linen Bar—thus cutting off a tedious and difficult part of navigation. This channel was carefully sounded, as well as its bearings and distances ascertained. It is to be stated, however, that it allows a draft of 7.50 only at high water—the depth, for a short distance, being only at low water 2.5. Accordingly, the Commissioners have had in view a connection of the two waters by a cut through the peninsula, somewhere at a distance of two miles or two miles and a half from the Cape. No definite location has yet been made; nevertheless, the Commissioners believe they have stated the maximum cost in the estimates which they have herewith presented. Such a connection appears possible at small expence—it has been said by some, who have important interests involved, that its execution would prove of very great benefit to east Virginia: indeed it appears the only internal improvement which is applicable to the situation of that section of country.