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ST. MARY'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PROSPECTUS

OF

SOUTHERN MARYLAND RAILROAD.

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

GIBSON BROTHERS, PRINTERS.

1881.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WASHINGTON, *January 1, 1881.*

J. H. LINVILLE, Esq.,

President, Southern Maryland Railroad Company:

SIR:

The following report on the Southern Maryland Railroad, made after a personal examination of the region traversed by the Road, is respectfully submitted.

Your ob't servant,

J. L. MEIGS,

Chief Engineer.

SOUTHERN MARYLAND RAILROAD COMPANY.

Officers.

J. H. LINVILLE, PHILADELPHIA, PA.,	<i>President.</i>
B. F. FOLSOM, " "	<i>Treasurer.</i>
M. H. HOFFMAN, " "	<i>Secretary.</i>

Directors.

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JOHN M. BROOM, ST. MARY'S, MD.	

Engineer.

L. MEIGS, WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE SOUTHERN MARYLAND RAILROAD.

I.—Location of the Road and Objects of its Projectors.

The Southern Maryland Railroad is designed to extend from Point Lookout, at the mouth of the Potomac river, to Washington, where it will make connection with the Baltimore & Potomac Branch of the Pennsylvania Road, and with the Washington and Metropolitan Branch of the Baltimore & Ohio Road.

From Point Lookout to Brandywine, where it intersects the Pope's Creek Branch of the Baltimore & Potomac Road, is a distance of 58.01 miles, of which 45.8 miles have been graded. Thence to its northern terminus, a distance of 19 miles, no work has been done. The length of the road will therefore be 77.01 miles. In its location it conforms closely to the dividing ridge between the waters of Potomac river and Chesapeake Bay, for a distance of 68 miles northwest of Point Lookout; thence it descends to and crosses the Eastern Branch of the Potomac near Washington.

The charter is a liberal one, and was obtained in 1868. The objects of its projectors were the agricultural development of Point Lookout peninsula, and to open a new outlet to the Atlantic Ocean, by way of St. Mary's river and Chesapeake Bay, for the vast and ever-increasing productions of the great West, and for the coals of Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

II.—Connections with Railroads and Harbors and with the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal.

Northeast of Washington, within one and a quarter miles of the city limits, the Southern Maryland road will make

connections with the Washington and Metropolitan Branches of the Baltimore & Ohio Road. Eastward of the city, a mile and a half from the city limits, it will intersect and make junction with the Baltimore and Potomac Branch of the Pennsylvania Road, and the Alexandria Branch of the Baltimore & Ohio Road.

By a short spur track from the main line, near Benning's Bridge, to a point on the Eastern Branch of the Potomac, below the bridge of the Baltimore & Potomac Road, the Southern Maryland Railroad will be connected, in effect, with the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal. To this point the canal boats, loaded with Maryland coal, can be towed from Georgetown, and their cargoes there transferred to the cars for transport to St. Mary's harbor.

At Brandywine it will connect with the Pope's Landing branch of the Baltimore & Potomac Road.

By these connections Point Lookout peninsula will be placed in direct and rapid communication with Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. The distances from St. Mary's harbor to these cities will be 65, 96, 194, 284, and 516 miles, respectively, and the times of travel to them will be $2\frac{1}{2}$, 4, 8, 11, and $20\frac{1}{2}$ hours. From St. Mary's harbor to Pittsburg, Cincinnati, Louisville, Chicago, and St. Louis the distances will be 365, 628, 738, 878, and 968 miles, respectively, and the times of travel $14\frac{1}{2}$, 25, 29, 35, and 39 hours.

The Southern Maryland Road is virtually an extension of the Pennsylvania and the Baltimore & Ohio Roads to deep water in the lower Chesapeake, and through them and their ramifications it becomes connected with the whole railroad system of the country, and with the coal fields of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

At Point Lookout the road touches Cornfield Harbor, and at St. Mary's the estuary of St. Mary's river, which is one of the safest and most capacious harbors on the Atlantic

coast. A branch line, 2½ to 3 miles long, is designed to be built from the crossing of Chancellor's Run to Drum Point Harbor, at the mouth of Patuxent river. The road will, therefore, make three connections with the low Potomac and Chesapeake Bay.

Cornfield Harbor

Is a bight in the Potomac shore immediately north of Point Lookout, and affords 10 feet of water within 400 feet of the shore; thence the depth increases to 15 feet at a quarter of a mile off shore. A pile pier extending out to deep water near the southern extremity of the harbor furnishes the necessary accommodation for the steamers of the Washington and Norfolk and Baltimore and Norfolk lines, which regularly touch at Point Lookout. Additional piers can be cheaply built out to 12-foot water, which would enable the fishing vessels easily to transfer their freights to the cars to be carried to Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. In bad weather, however, the anchorage is not sufficiently protected, and vessels would be obliged to take refuge in the estuary of St. Mary's river, 8 miles north of Cornfield Harbor.

St. Mary's Harbor and its Advantages.

Its area, coast line, and depth.—This name is given to the estuary of St. Mary's river, about 8 miles in length from mouth to head. The general direction of the estuary is north and south. At the mouth, between Kitt's Point and St. George's Island, the width is 2.4 miles. Here the deep-water channel is a mile wide and 30 feet in depth. Thence to the mouth of St. Inigo's Creek is a fine basin of water, 2½ miles long, having an average width of 1.6 miles, and affording everywhere 24 feet of water at mean low tide. Above this, to St. Mary's Point, a distance of 3 miles, is a second basin, having an average width of 2 miles and a depth

of 21 feet at mean low water. We then enter the Horseshoe Basin, extending to Horseshoe Point, 1.2 miles long, $\frac{6}{10}$ mile wide, and 16 feet deep. Above this, for $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles, is a sheet of water $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in width, and with a minimum channel depth of 11 feet.

Here are seven square miles of water, bordered by banks which rise boldly, almost from the water's edge, to heights varying from 10 to 45 feet. From the crests of these banks on the east side of the river the ground gradually rises for two miles or more to the summit of the dividing ridge between St. Mary's river and Chesapeake Bay, attaining an elevation of a hundred feet. The dividing ridge between the Potomac and St. Mary's rivers is also very high. The estuary is, therefore, completely sheltered from storms, and as it includes a water area greater than that part of New York harbor extending from Hoboken, past Jersey City, Governor's Island, and Brooklyn, to Williamsburg, the harbor is not only perfectly safe, but capacious enough for an immense shipping. Above St. Inigo's Creek the deep water approaches the shore closely, and by building a railroad track along the crest of the high banks, from Horseshoe Point southward to the creek, a distance of four miles, ample room will be obtained for the construction (at moderate cost) of depots, elevators, and piers, for the storage and shipment of coal and grain. Three-fourths of a mile of this great water front is accessible, at low-water stage, to vessels of 24-feet draught, 1.6 miles to vessels of 21-feet draught, and 1.65 miles to vessels of 16-feet draught. A track may also be built at a lower level, along shore, from which short piers may be extended to deep water for the transfer of the freights of fishing and lumber vessels to the railway. Numerous springs breaking out of the high banks of the harbor afford good water for the shipping that may be congregated here, so that in no respect, is this fine harbor lacking in the necessary accommodations for vessels.

Accessibility of St. Mary's Harbor to the Ocean.—It possesses, moreover, great advantages over the ports of Washington and Baltimore in its nearness to the Atlantic Ocean, and in being accessible without requiring the services of professional pilots. From the mouth of St. Mary's river to the entrance to Chesapeake Bay, near Cape Henry, is a distance of $89\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and everywhere there is ample sea-room, and a depth of water, never less than $5\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms, at mean low tide. No obstruction from ice in this part of Chesapeake Bay is encountered in winter, nor is the occasional thin ice of St. Mary's estuary an obstacle to navigation. During the winter of 1878-9, while the Delaware, Patapsco, and Potomac rivers were frozen, many large vessels were floating in this harbor.

The Advantages of St. Mary's Harbor to Vessels Engaged in the Carrying Trade.—From Cape Henry to Washington is 190.8 miles; to Baltimore, 175 miles. St. Mary's harbor is, therefore, 101.5 miles nearer to the Atlantic than Washington, and $85\frac{3}{4}$ miles nearer than Baltimore. An incoming vessel might, therefore, enter St. Mary's harbor, discharge her cargo, and have it sent by rail to these cities sooner than she could beat up the Potomac river, or the upper Chesapeake Bay, to either of them. An outgoing vessel might take a cargo of Maryland coal at St. Mary's, and pass Cape Henry into the open ocean, before a Washington or Baltimore vessel could make Point Lookout.

By a wise adjustment of the charges for the carriage of early vegetables, fish, oysters, and crabs from St. Mary's to Washington and Baltimore, enabling the gardeners and fishermen to send forward their products to these markets at moderate rates, that part at least of the carrying-trade of southern Chesapeake Bay, now done by sailing vessels, might be diverted to the railroad. In the summer time, even, these vessels would find their advantage in availing themselves of the rapidity of railroad transport, by which

they would be enabled to forward cargoes more frequently to market. And especially would this be the case in the winter season, when, owing to the prevailing northwest winds, four or five days are sometimes consumed in making a voyage from the lower Bay to Washington or Baltimore.

The Advantages of St. Mary's Harbor to the Chesapeake Fisheries and to the Coal Trades of Baltimore and Georgetown.—

It must be borne in mind, too, that these two ports labor under the great disadvantage, when compared with St. Mary's, of having their water approaches obstructed by ice during severe winters, when the upper Potomac and the harbor of Baltimore are frozen over. The detention of the multitude of small sailing vessels carrying forward the vast supplies of fish required by the consumption and industries of Baltimore, Washington, and Alexandria, entails great loss upon those engaged in the trade. The Georgetown and Baltimore coal trade is also seriously injured at such times by the detention of vessels engaged in carrying the Maryland soft coals to the different markets on the Potomac, on the Bay shore, and on the Atlantic coast. The greater part of this loss would be prevented by making St. Mary's harbor at such times the terminus of the shipping lines. It is well known that the supplies of fish required by Baltimore and Washington are chiefly obtained from the lower Potomac and from lower Chesapeake Bay south of the mouth of Patuxent river; that is, from those parts of the river and Bay that are not obstructed by freezing. The products of these fisheries can always be transferred to the railroad at St. Mary's harbor, and thus be unfailingly and rapidly carried to market. In like manner, by the establishment of depots of Maryland coal at St. Mary's, the shipments to the lower Chesapeake Bay and to Atlantic ports need never be delayed by severe weather, and the trade can be carried on without detention and consequent loss. And even in *all* weathers the transfer of the coal to sea-going

vessels at this point rather than at Georgetown and Baltimore, would dispense with the tortuous navigation of the Potomac and upper Chesapeake Bay, both going and returning, and would enable the carriers to make a greater number of voyages during the year without incurring the present delays and risks.

As a port for the shipment of Western grain to Europe, St. Mary's harbor possesses advantages superior to those of Baltimore. The distance from St. Louis to the Atlantic Ocean at Cape Henry, *via* Baltimore, is 1,104 miles; *via* Washington and St. Mary's harbor, this distance is 1,064 miles. Again, the distance from Chicago to Cape Henry, *via* Baltimore, is 1,014 miles; *via* Washington and St. Mary's harbor, this distance is 974 miles. The St. Mary's route, therefore, in either case, is 40 miles shorter than that by Baltimore. The advantages of St. Mary's harbor, then, as a point for the shipment of grain for Europe, consist in shorter routes to the Atlantic from the great centres of production; in greater wharfage room for the transfer of the grain to vessels, and in an ever open and unobstructed water route, free from the expenses of pilotage and demurrage. If, therefore, so much has been recently accomplished in diverting a portion of the grain-carrying trade to Baltimore, what may not capitalists accomplish at St. Mary's by suitable railway connections, and by establishing a line of steamships thence to Europe? A new source of business is thus offered to the Pennsylvania and the Baltimore & Ohio railroads, both of which great corporations may yet find it profitable, in the future growth of the country, to encourage the transport of grain by their lines from St. Louis and Chicago to St. Mary's harbor.

The advantages of St. Mary's harbor as a site for a naval depot and coaling station have long occupied the attention of the General Government. In December, 1816, Captain David Porter, then a member of the board of Navy Commissioners, reported to the Secretary of War in reference to St. Mary's harbor as follows:

“In point of healthiness of situation, security from maritime attack, and (I am informed) from ice, excellence of harbor, and the easy ingress and egress to an inner harbor at all times to ships drawing not more than 24½ feet of water, the advantages it offers by means of streams of water for labor-saving purposes, and its convenience for forests of pine timber, St. Mary’s is, in my opinion, superior to any other place, of which I have a knowledge, on the Chesapeake for a naval depot.”

Commodore John Rodgers, a member of the same board, reporting on the subject at the same time, says:

“As a safe and commodious harbor it (St. Mary’s river) is not excelled by any in the United States.”

After describing the upper estuary, he adds:

“This river above, where it is perfectly susceptible of defence against a naval force, presents in several respects the most seducing reasons for its selection as a naval depot and rendezvous.”

In December, 1874, a board of naval officers, appointed under a resolution of Congress, reported on the expediency of establishing a naval coaling station at St. Mary’s harbor. The report describes the harbor, and then proceeds:

“The bituminous coal fields of Maryland and Virginia are located from St. Mary’s harbor about 350 miles; those of the semi-bituminous of Maryland, near Cumberland, 250 miles, and to the anthracite fields of Pennsylvania 280 miles.

“These coal fields, on the completion of the Southern Maryland Railroad, will be accessible by rail from the harbor of St. Mary’s, and thus become available and practically unlimited source of coal supply.

“The Delaware river is at present the principal shipping-point for the anthracites, Washington and Baltimore being the shipping-points for the bituminous coal from the great Maryland basin.

"The board, in the consideration of this subject, respectfully submit, in view of the contingency of war with a powerful foreign power, whether or not it is wise or judicious to rely upon any one shipping-point, others being available, for its coal supply. With respect to the space and fitness for such a depot, the St. Mary's river is in all respects unexceptionable, large and commodious, with sufficient depth of water for all classes of vessels, accessible at all seasons of the year, and not subject to being obstructed by ice, as on the upper portions of the Potomac, Pamlico and Delaware rivers. It is situated midway North and South, near the Atlantic coast, and equally convenient to naval stations North and South.

"It is near the confluence of the Potomac river and Chesapeake Bay, and within 86 miles of the Atlantic Ocean, and is not therefore subject to the longer and more tedious navigation as compared with Washington and Baltimore. By the completion of the Southern Maryland Railroad, it will be connected with the great coal fields of Maryland and Virginia *via* the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and which any desirable quantity of coal can be delivered to the harbor of St. Mary's at all seasons of the year.

"It will connect directly with the anthracite coal region of Pennsylvania *via* the Southern Maryland Railroad, Baltimore & Potomac, and Northern Central Railroad.

"It will be connected with the seat of Government by a railroad, which will render it accessible within two hours and a half from the capital of the nation."

Commodore Foxhall A. Parker, U. S. N., who commanded the gun-boat flotilla on the Potomac in 1864-'5, remarks:

"There could be no better place for a coal depot than St. Mary's river, and exactly where I had mine during the civil war—easy of access day and night, plenty of water, and always as smooth as a mill-pond."

The board conclude their report with the recommendation to establish a coaling station at some point on St. Mary's river. Cumberland coal is preferred on steam vessels on account of its superiority as a generator of steam, and

certain that the large supplies required by the Navy could be drawn from the Maryland mines and delivered at St. Mary's more cheaply than at any other point equally accessible from the ocean. This, because of the direct and comparatively short railroad communication between the mines and the harbor. Here, too, the transfer of the coal from the depots to the vessels could be economically made on account of the unrivalled facilities of the place for such service. Moreover, the position of such a coaling station, midway between North and South, would enable the coal to be readily shipped to other depots on the coast, and would make the station a most convenient source of supply to a steam fleet operating against an enemy in time of war. In like manner, were there a *naval depot* at St. Mary's, all other naval supplies could be economically and readily distributed to other points northward or southward. It can scarcely be doubted that the Government will take action in accordance with the repeated recommendations of naval boards as soon as the Southern Maryland road shall be completed.

The same causes which would make St. Mary's harbor a most favorable site for a naval coaling station would make it also *the most eligible point for the shipment of Maryland coals* to foreign and coastwise ports. It would be in constant and rapid communication with the mines, whence the coal could be transported and delivered on board vessels with one, or at most two, handlings. The shipping point would be constantly accessible from the ocean, and the vessels would deliver the coal directly at the places of its consumption. The business of the carrying vessels would be uninterrupted by ice obstructions, the expenses of pilotage and demurrage would be avoided, and a greater number of voyages would be made during the year.

Contrast these facilities for the distribution of the much-prized soft coal of Maryland with the present mode of transporting it to the factories of the large Eastern cities. The

route chiefly followed is, first, by rail from Cumberland to Baltimore. There the coal is transferred to barges, which are "towed by steam up Chesapeake Bay to the Chesapeake & Delaware Canal, a distance of over forty miles; thence it is sent through the canal to Delaware Bay, a distance of fifteen miles; and thence, up Delaware Bay to Philadelphia, a distance not less than forty-five miles. From Philadelphia the bulk of it is transported to New York, Brooklyn, and Newark, N. J., through the Raritan Canal, an additional distance of one hundred miles. These canals are frequently obstructed by ice for two or three months of the year, during which period the transportation is entirely stopped. It is evident that the expenses attendant upon the transfer of coal at Baltimore from the cars to the barges, its slow and tedious transportation by the route above referred to, and the obstruction of the route by ice during a large portion of the year, will give the harbor and depot at St. Mary's a very great advantage in its distribution in point of time and expense."

The Southern Maryland Railroad Company has secured ample grounds at St. Mary's for the deposit and transfer of coal. The place selected is very favorable for the construction of piers and coal-shoots, and the depth of water at low tide is sufficient for the largest vessels.

Finally, the serious obstruction of Baltimore harbor and of the Potomac at Washington from ice during severe winters gives a yet greater importance to the advantages of St. Mary's harbor, which is admirably located as an entrepot for the steamers and sailing vessels bound to these cities, but unable to reach them, at such times. Here their passengers can be landed, their freights discharged, and sent forward to their destination by rail, without delay. Here, too, these vessels can be promptly loaded and dispatched on their return voyages.

The delays and consequent commercial losses caused by

these ice blockades were signally illustrated in the winter of 1878-'9, when, "for over one month, six hundred sail of "coasting and bay-trading vessels and over twenty large foreign steamers and ships, besides a very large fleet of oyster "pungies, were firmly ice-bound in the Patuxent and lower "estuaries of the Potomac. Among these vessels were many "coal droghers bound to Alexandria, Washington, and Baltimore." If the Southern Maryland Road had been built, these vessels could have promptly discharged and received cargoes at St. Mary's harbor, where ample provision for this service can easily be made by the Company, on their own grounds. And it is estimated that one hundred car-loads of oysters, fish, and crabs would at that time have been sent forward to the Alexandria, Washington, and Baltimore markets daily.

Drum Point harbor is the lower portion of the estuary of Patuxent river, and lies between Drum Point and Town Point. The area of the deep water is about three square miles, and the depths vary from $3\frac{1}{4}$ to 14 fathoms. The southern part of the harbor is well protected from winds, and in the southeast bend of the shore $4\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms of water are found close in to land. A short branch from this point to the main line of the road near the crossing of Chancellor's Run will enable inward-bound steamers and sailing-vessels to send forward their passengers and cargoes to Baltimore, when, in thick weather, they might be delayed many hours, or even days, in making their destination. This connection of Drum Point harbor by rail with Baltimore and Washington will be especially beneficial to fishing vessels, whose cargoes can thus be readily sent forward to those cities during the prevalence of bad weather.

Point Lookout as a Watering-Place.—Point Lookout, before the late war, was a popular and fashionable bathing-place. It was accessible, then as now, by lines of steamers from Washington, Baltimore, and Norfolk in eight, seven,

and six hours' time. A good hotel and a number of cottages furnished the necessary accommodations for the visitors, who came from both Northern and Southern States. The place has like topographical features with Cape May and other bathing resorts. The long peninsula, extending into the sea, offers to visitors a gradually descending beach, exempt from dangerous undertow, and a surf free from violence. The coast, back country, and various drives are attractive, the air is pure and wholesome, and all kinds of marine luxuries abound. The hotel and other buildings were destroyed during the war. When these shall be replaced by better ones, as is now contemplated, and the Southern Maryland Road shall give easy, safe, and cheap daily access to it, Point Lookout can scarcely fail to become one of our greatest summer resorts. No other point equally near to Washington, Baltimore, and southern Pennsylvania offers equal attractions with Point Lookout; indeed, it is the only resort within easy reach of these cities and must be extensively patronized.

The projectors of this road are warranted in anticipating a large revenue from the summer travel to Point Lookout, from the parallel case of the West Jersey Railroad, 80 miles in length, and traversing a comparatively barren country between Philadelphia and Cape May. It depends mainly for its revenue on the summer travel to the Cape, though in active competition with the Delaware river boats, and though those great bathing-places, Atlantic City and Long Branch, are in easy reach of Philadelphia by rail. Nevertheless the road receives "a large annual return on an investment of "nearly \$4,000,000."

III.—Advantages to be Derived from Construction of the Road; Expected Traffic.

Some of these have been alluded to in presenting the advantages of St. Mary's harbor. It is easy to see the importance of the Southern Maryland Road to Washington and

Baltimore, in giving them an ever-open outlet to the ocean during the long periods when their harbors are obstructed by ice. At such times their coal export and their industries in packing oysters, crabs, and clams are suspended; their foreign and coastwise business is interrupted, and they can neither receive the produce nor supply the wants of the inhabitants of the shores of Chesapeake Bay and Potomac river. An enterprise which will, in great measure, remove these evils, must increase the prosperity of these cities, and add to their population and taxable wealth.

The counties of *St. Mary's*, *Charles*, and *Prince George*, traversed centrally by this Road, *will be fully developed by it*. The soil of this region is chiefly a sandy loam, though there are wide areas of clay and gravelly loams. Though settled for more than two hundred years, there are yet extensive untouched forests of oak, chestnut, and pine trees. There are extensive clearings, also, and many square miles of land once cleared but now grown up with small pines. The ground is scarcely ever precipitous, but lies favorably for tillage. The principal crops raised are corn, wheat, and tobacco, the latter being the crop most relied on for ready money.

The price of land is moderate, and the construction of the road will throw it open to immigration. It is admirably adapted to the growth of vegetables, and as soon as these can be forwarded daily, cheaply, and without delay to such great markets as Washington and Baltimore, the people will be stimulated to fertilize, to underdrain, and to introduce improved modes and implements of agriculture.

The population of the three peninsular counties, *St. Mary's*, *Charles*, and *Prince George*, during the years 1860, 1870, and 1880, is thus given in the United States Census Reports:

	1860.	1870.	1880.
St. Mary's.....	15,213	14,944	12,717
Charles	16,517	15,738	18,561
Prince George.....	23,327	21,138	26,482

It will be seen that the population of each of these counties decreased from 1860 to 1870, and that the population of St. Mary's steadily decreased from 1860 to 1880. Charles and Prince George, however, have increased in population during the decade, 1870-1880. There cannot be a doubt that the increase in these two counties is due to the building of the Pope's Creek Branch of the Baltimore & Potomac Railroad, which passes through the middle of them, and which was opened for business in 1872. We may, therefore, confidently expect a further influx of population upon the completion of the Southern Maryland Road, an increase in property values, the improvement of lands, and a more varied agriculture.

Passenger traffic.—While it is believed that the local travel of the road will fully equal that of the majority of the Maryland and Delaware local lines, it is expected that the summer travel to Point Lookout and the Southern travel *via* Point Lookout and Norfolk will make its total passenger traffic exceed that of other lines.

The reasons for expecting a large summer travel from Baltimore and Washington to Point Lookout have already been given.

Long-established lines of steamers convey a constant stream of Southern travel from Norfolk to Washington and Baltimore, making their trips in $14\frac{1}{2}$ and $13\frac{1}{2}$ hours, respectively. Now, if these steamers were put on between Norfolk and Point Lookout, passengers might be carried from Norfolk to Washington and Baltimore, by way of the Southern Maryland Road, in $9\frac{3}{4}$ and $10\frac{3}{4}$ hours, respectively; a gain in time of 5 and 3 hours, respectively. Geographically, this route between the South Atlantic and the Eastern States is as short as any other, and passengers from Norfolk landed at Point Lookout could be sent through to all the cities of the North and West, enjoying all the facilities of sleeping-cars and close connections, and saving from 3 to 5

hours' time, in comparison with the existing Norfolk-Baltimore and Norfolk-Washington routes. Unlike these, moreover, the Southern Maryland route would never be closed by obstruction from ice. These advantages must gain for the road a large share of the constantly-increasing travel along the Atlantic seaboard.

Coal Traffic.—The Baltimore and Ohio Road, during the year ending September 30, 1879, delivered at Locust Point, in the city of Baltimore, 1,071,566 tons of Maryland coal. This was exclusive of 56,430 tons delivered at other places within the city, and was doubtless shipped to other places of consumption. With the greatly superior facilities of St. Mary's harbor for the direct and uninterrupted receipt and shipment of this coal, it is not unreasonable to anticipate an annual movement over the Southern Maryland Road of 250,000 tons of this coal, when once the business is organized.

The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Co., during eleven months ending January 30, 1880, delivered at Georgetown, D. C. 484,996 tons of the same valuable coal. Of this, fully 420,000 tons will be shipped down the Potomac to coastwise ports. It is therefore confidently expected that, with proper arrangements made for the transfer from the canal boats to the Company's cars at a point on the Eastern Branch of the Potomac, 300,000 tons of this coal may be annually transported to St. Mary's harbor for shipment there.

Fisheries of the Chesapeake Bay.—Next to the coal traffic, the transportation of the products of the Chesapeake fisheries must prove the most important source of revenue to the Road. Point Lookout peninsula lies contiguous to the most productive fishing grounds of the Bay and lower Potomac. The safety of St. Mary's harbor in all weathers, its accessibility in winter, and the means afforded by the Road for the quick delivery in market of the cargoes of fishing vessels, thus avoiding the delays caused by the tedious navigation

and frequent obstructions of the Potomac and upper Chesapeake, must induce the fishermen to make this harbor the northern terminus of their trips. What accession of business this will bring to the Road will be understood by considering the statistics of these fisheries for the past year.

The special report of Mr. Richard H. Edmonds on the oyster fisheries of Chesapeake Bay gives the following statistics in reference to Virginia:

"There are engaged in the dredging business 4,481 canoes, 217 larger vessels, manned by 14,236 men. The earnings of the tongsmen are \$1,772,000, and those on the larger vessels \$1,022,172 yearly. The value of the canoes and other vessels is \$1,014,250.

"There are 25 firms in Virginia engaged in packing oysters, of which 13 are in Norfolk; capital invested, \$119,350; value of buildings and grounds, \$167,500; average number of hands employed, 1,528; wages, \$200,951; bushels raw packed, 1,429,130, valued at \$611,147; bushels steamed, 193,000, valued at \$120,900; total packed, 1,622,130 bushels, valued at \$756,693.

"The total capital invested in dredging, packing, &c., in Virginia is \$1,361,100; total persons employed, 16,264; wages and earnings, \$3,135,923, and the estimated number of people depending on the trade is 65,056.

"There were shipped from Virginia in shell for the year ended last May, 3,315,190 bushels; packed in the State, 1,622,130, and used for local consumption, 1,900,000 bushels."

The following statement of the products of the Maryland oyster fisheries for the season of 1879-'80 is taken from the *New York Commercial Bulletin* of September 27, 1880:

	<i>Bushels.</i>
"Packed in the State.....	6,663,492
"Shipped out of the State.....	2,021,040
"Local consumption of Baltimore.....	818,680
" " " of other cities in the State..	200,000
" " " of counties	875,000
"Total	10,568,212

"The total number of bushels packed in the State was 7,653,492, of which 1,000,000 bushels came from Virginia.

"Total receipts at Baltimore, 7,277,972 bushels.

"Capital invested in the State, \$6,245,876.

"Persons employed, 24,377.

"The grand total for Chesapeake Bay (including Maryland and Virginia) shows \$7,606,976 invested; 17,406,322 bushels caught; 10,167 persons employed in oyster packing houses; 28,034 employed on boats, and 2,490 others; in all, 40,691 persons, with earnings of \$6,956,444. The total value of all oysters caught in the Bay and sold from first hands is about \$4,000,000 yearly, and the product of the packing houses is \$4,610,995."

It is to be regretted that no reliable exhibit of the clam and crab fisheries of the Bay for the past year can now be obtained in advance of the forthcoming report of the United States Fish Commission. Some idea of their magnitude is given by the fact that the Board of Health of Washington have inspected during the year ended June 30, 1880, 1,301,750 bushels of clams and 698,789 bushels of crabs, delivered at Washington. The quantities sent to Baltimore must have been far greater.

It is manifest that a railroad penetrating almost to the centre of fishing grounds yielding so great an annual production, and connecting them with the cities where the fish are packed and distributed, must acquire for itself the business of transporting the raw products of the fisheries. It is even anticipated by experts that the construction of the road will transfer the packing business, mainly, from Baltimore and Alexandria to St. Mary's harbor. In that case the road would become the means of distributing the packed fish to the Northern and Western cities.

Other sources of revenue to the road will be the transportation of early vegetables in great quantities from the shores of lower Chesapeake Bay and from the South Atlantic States to Northern cities, and the carriage of the United States mails.

IV. - Estimate of Revenues.

Transportation of coal from Baltimore & Ohio	
Railroad, 250,000 tons, at 70c.....	\$175,000
Transportation of coal from Chesapeake & Ohio	
Canal, 300,000 tons, at 65c	195,000
Freight, passengers, and mails.....	331,000
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Total earnings.....	\$701,000
Deduct running expenses, 60 per cent.....	420,600
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Net earnings.....	\$280,400

APPENDIX.

The commercial losses sustained by the cities of Baltimore, Washington, and Alexandria, owing to the ice obstructions in the Patapsco and Potomac rivers, were never more signally illustrated than during the month ending January 15, 1881. For the greater part of this period, access to Baltimore has only been made possible through the active efforts of two powerful and costly ice-boats, owned by the city of Baltimore, and built for this service. These boats, by their daily movement, have kept open a narrow and constantly-freezing channel, and have assisted the overloaded tugs in taking their tows up and down the river.

But, to take the case of the oyster trade of Baltimore, no provision of tugs and ice-boats can fully meet its demands. The receipts of oysters in Baltimore during the season of 1879-'80, as we have seen, were 7,277,972 bushels—about one and a half times the entire product of the Virginia fisheries. The latter employed, in oyster dredging, 4,481 canoes and 1,217 larger vessels. No statistics showing the number of vessels engaged in supplying Baltimore with oysters can be obtained, but it is manifest that their tonnage largely exceeds that of the Virginia fisheries. An open and unobstructed harbor is necessary to the full prosecution of this business, and the laying-up of many vessels and the delays of navigation have inflicted great losses upon the trade.

What these losses are may be conjectured from the parallel case of the Washington and Alexandria oyster trade. The records of the Washington Board of Health show a falling off of fifty per cent. in oyster receipts at that port during December, 1880, compared with the corresponding month of 1879. The greater part of the Washington supply has been

...ed by rail from Baltimore and Quantico, the upper Potomac having been virtually closed to navigation during the latter half of the month of December, 1880. From the most accessible sources of information, it can hardly be doubted that the oyster receipts of the two cities, during the month ending January 15, 1881, have fallen short of the receipts of the corresponding month of last year by 530,000 bushels, valued at \$225,000.

Were the Southern Maryland Railroad in operation, there would be no deficiencies in the monthly yield of the fisheries, due, at least, to delayed transportation. The present difficulty of transportation and its attendant losses would be removed, and oysters could be carried by rail, from Point Lookout to the heart of the continent, in the time now occupied in transporting them by vessel from Point Lookout to Baltimore.

The grain trade of Baltimore, moreover, if intended to compete with that of New York, will require, in the future, an unobstructed outlet to the ocean, and, among other plans proposed to obtain this, none is more feasible than a railway communication between Baltimore and St. Mary's harbor, and the building of grain elevators at the latter point. Here, at all seasons, vessels may safely enter from the ocean, discharge and forward their cargoes by rail to Baltimore, and be loaded again with Baltimore exports. It should be borne in mind that, practically, St. Mary's harbor lies as near to the grain-fields of the great West as does Baltimore.

More serious even than the losses of the oyster trade are those of the coal shippers of Alexandria, Georgetown, and Baltimore, resulting from the ice obstructions in the Patapsco and Potomac. The latter river has been closed to navigation almost the entire month ending January 15, 1881. Vessels are ice-bound, and the usual steady shipment of Maryland coal to the Northern coast ports is wholly suspended.

What the loss has been to the Baltimore coal trade, during the present period of obstructed navigation, cannot now be ascertained. It has doubtless been very great, while all movement of coal northward by the interior canal line is suspended. But all losses in this trade would be avoided by the construction of the Southern Maryland Railroad, and by the erection of coal shoots and depots at St. Mary's harbor. Supplies of coal brought to this point by rail, with unvarying regularity, from the Maryland mines, over the Metropolitan Branch of the Baltimore & Ohio Road and the Maryland Southern Road, could thence be shipped at all seasons, and without delays, to the places of consumption.