

Report of the Commissioners
Appointed to Survey A Railroad
from Point Lookout, to Some Point in
Prince George's County. The Southern
Maryland Railroad. Volume 1870

Commissioners Appointed to Survey
A Railroad from Point Lookout, to
Some Point in Prince George's County.

REPORT.

To the Honorable Legislature of Maryland.

The undersigned, appointed by Gov. Swann, by authority of an Act passed by the General Assembly of Maryland, during the January session of 1868, to have a survey and estimate made for constructing a Railroad from some point in Prince George's county to Point Lookout, report, that in consequence of some of the gentlemen who were appointed by Gov. Swann, declining, the Board was not filled and qualified as required by the Act, until the 4th of September, 1868. Anxious to carry out conscientiously the intention of the Act by which we were appointed, and knowing that all preliminary surveys that had heretofore been made in the State. (necessarily hurried and defective for the want of means to perfect them,) were looked upon with suspicion by capitalists, we determined to give our whole time to make a careful survey, and an elaborate estimate and such suggestions as would induce capitalists and those interested, to build this road.

We, therefore, employed a full corps of able and efficient engineers, consisting of Mr. Benj. Tippet, of St. Mary's county, Chief Engineer, Mr. Addison Marbury, of Charles county as first assistant; Messrs. Hanes, of Carroll county, leveller, Chunn, of St. Mary's county, transit; Dwyer, draughtsman, and the necessary assistants. We immediately set them to work at Point Lookout, so as to give us time to fix the other terminus of the road, which was left to us by the Act. This decision was one of great importance, as we all felt that the building of the road mainly depended on it. To decide this properly, a Committee of us was ap-

pointed to wait on Messrs. Garrett and Bowie, the Presidents of the two great Railroad Companies towards which we were surveying, and to whom, in some measure, the people of this peninsula looked for assistance ultimately to complete this road. Mr. Garrett answered our proposal, as follows:

"The Baltimore and Ohio Company is at present engaged in so many and such costly enterprises that it is deemed injudicious to create further obligations. The Company will be prepared to extend a cordial welcome to this road when constructed, and co-operate effectively in arrangements for developments of mutual interests."

Gov. Bowie kindly received us, and assured us of all the assistance that the Baltimore and Potomac could give, if we would make the terminus on this road. The Committee, believing that if Charles and St. Mary's counties would join the State appropriations, together with what assistance they could get from the citizens of the counties along the line, in rights of way, ties and money, the road could be constructed to the junction of this road, and the Baltimore and Potomac road would furnish all the necessary rolling stock for the advantages accruing to her. These facts, which the Engineer's Report will show could have been, and, to be correct, almost decided the Committee to recommend this as the terminus of the survey, though contrary to the convictions of one of the Committee, Mr. Hutchins, who always advocated Washington city as the natural terminus of this road, but yielded them at the time to this safe argument. The Committee after seeing Gov. Bowie, and upon these reasons, concluding to make the Balto. & Potomac Road, near Brandywine, the terminus, were startled with the knowledge that Gov. Bowie had applied to the Commissioners of Charles county for their State appropriation. This surprised them the more, as they had heard from influential friends of the Baltimore and Potomac Road that the Company had all the means to build to the Potomac, without one cent from the State or people, except the right of way, and that, according to their charter and promise, it was so contracted for. The great privilege of building a parallel branch to the Baltimore and Ohio Road, being the lever by which the means to accomplish this was

raised, and although we know that Charles county, by joining her fund to that of St Mary's, could have two roads, the Baltimore and Potomac through the west or centre of the county, and the Southern Maryland Railroad through the eastern part, yet, we felt that an organized Road with so able and efficient a President as Gov Bowie, against an unorganized road, would carry the fund as he requested, even if it left but one road to Charles county. Therefore, it behooved us to look for a safer terminus, if we expected anything to result from our survey and the expenditure of the State. We then decided, at the request of Mr Hutchins, to send him to Washington to wait on the city authorities. Upon his statement of the facts, the Mayor recommended, and the City Council unanimously appropriated a thousand dollars to continue the survey to the city, and together with the Board of Trade and other wealthy and influential citizens of Washington, assured him of such aid as would make the building of this road a certainty. This decided the commissioners at once to adopt Washington city as the terminus and we all agreed, that although we had no authority to use the State's money in the District, (and we beg leave to say here, once for all, that we never did) yet, as our authority carried us to the District line, and the city's money carried us to the city, we would adopt this route as a whole this, we hope, will account satisfactorily for the manner of our report, and the suggestion it contains. Having adopted this line from Washington city to Point Lookout, and believing this would be the one eventually built, all our suggestions are based on it, and all our arguments tend to that end.

We regard the Southern Maryland Railroad, or some similar improvement, as necessary, not only to south-western Maryland, but also to the city with which it is intended to communicate

As the population of Washington increases, the region of country from whence her supplies are obtained, must necessarily be extended. We allude principally to articles usually called marketing, which do not admit of long transportation and storage, but must be brought in from the surrounding country daily. Habit alone, as well as health and comfort,

require these as much as any other of the necessities of life, and no one will voluntarily live where they cannot be enjoyed.

As often as the population of the city is doubled, as often also must be doubled the area of country from whence these daily supplies are obtained, until at length, nothing short of Railroad speed can keep up a daily communication between the producer and the market. In the immediate vicinity of a growing city, the high price of land adds heavily to the value of its marketable productions. The same produce could be had from remote districts at a much lower figure, but for the distance over which it must be transported.

Distance, in a business view however, is not to be estimated by the intervening miles, but by the time consumed and the expenses incurred in passing over it.

Washington city may receive her daily supplies by the Railroad train from a distance of 20 or even 30 miles, as early and as cheap (if not cheaper) as they can now arrive by the ordinary market wagons from the dairies, orchards and vegetable gardens of the suburbs.

By substituting the Railroad train for the market cart, the city becomes the gainer in several ways, and loses nothing.

The daily supplies come in, in abundance, fresh and uncorrupted by adulterating mixtures or compounds. The trade of the city will be extended to the extreme limits of this daily intercourse, for whoever comes in to sell will generally wish to purchase. The suburban orchards, gardens, &c., will then be thrown into market, offering tempting bait for distant capital. By not making this substitution, the people of the National Capitol must very soon become sensible of a deficiency of daily necessities. Indeed, Baltimore has partly supplied their market on several occasions already. This deficiency will necessarily bring about high prices, which must be followed by an exodus of the laboring classes, unless higher prices are paid for labor. Since high prices and low rents are necessarily inseparable, the property holders in Washington will probably take interest in the matter.

Hitherto the citizens of Washington have shown no dis-

position to open the trading facilities with the surrounding country. They complain of being reduced to a suburb of Baltimore, but have taken no step to direct the trade of that city to themselves. They listen to denunciatory philippics against the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, but make no effort to become independent of the company. They have in fact, no trade except amongst themselves and with a narrow belt of country, including the District. They manufacture nothing necessary to the agricultural interest, nor do they buy anything, except what is consumed amongst them.

The National Treasury is emphatically the only support of Washington. Its very existence as a city is maintained by administering to the wants, convenience and pleasures of the officers and employees of the Federal Government, and of those who choose to visit the capital on business with them. Fifty or five hundred exceptions will make no change of issue. This is not very flattering to the pride of the citizens, but upon close examination you will perceive that it does them no injustice. A family that is always buying without producing or manufacturing anything for sale, is not sustained by its own resources, and what is true of single families is true of whole communities. If the Federal Government, however, is necessary, its officers and employees are necessary also, and those who accommodate them are no less so. No odium therefore can be attached to the people for occupying this position. the point is, they aim at no other, why not engage in commerce, in manufactures and in enterprise in general? Washington should be, and may be, to America, what Paris is to France

What will be the condition of the National city in case the seat of Government should be removed? What business could the citizens resort to to sustain themselves? Where are the mills, the factories, or the trade to sustain or to find employment for so large a population? And is the removal of the seat of the United States Government an event beyond probability? We know that the idea is often treated with ridicule, especially when suggested with a view to awaken the people of Washington to a sense of their commercial impotency, but we can imagine no future event, save such as are

certain to arrive, that may be predicted with more confidence. Almost every State capital has been removed from its first site, and in some instances the change from one to another place has occurred several times. The first location was fixed upon to suit the convenience of the population at the time, without any regard to the centre of the State's territory; but as the latter became filled up with inhabitants the seat of Government was removed time and time again, to suit the general convenience. And does not the same reason plead loudly for the removal of the capital of the Federal Government? When bounded by British America and the Lakes, Florida, the Atlantic and the Mississippi, the site of Washington was central, but now, when nearly the whole of North America is embraced within the limits of the country—a country extending from Alaska to Cape Sable, from New Brunswick to Mexico, and from ocean to ocean, the central point is to the sunset of the Mississippi, if not beyond the American Desert. The West had no choice in locating the National capital. It was then a wilderness. Now it is emphatically the United States. In addition to the long since dense population of men who never yet turned their backs upon an equal foe, the tide of immigration from the old world as well as from the old States, is unceasingly setting in that direction. They have the power to effect the removal of the seat of the National Government. They have had the power for years past. The difficulty was found in uniting upon the new location. That difficulty may delay the removal for some time, but the event is next to certainly to arrive. A division in the Federal Union may prevent it. It may be delayed, and possibly forever, also, by Washington becoming the boast of America, the mistress of fashion and refinement, the centre of trade, of commerce and manufactures. The citizens of Washington often indulge in prophecies of the future greatness of their city. Paris, London, and even Pekin are to be surpassed in population. Does it never occur to those same prophets, that there is nothing within or near the limits of Washington to sustain such a population? People cannot live on dreams or prophetic hallucinations. Until the business of the city is enlarged its inhabitants cannot be increased. It is true, an oyster-house,

a drinking-saloon, a few more restaurants, hotels, boarding-houses, &c, may start up and obtain a share of the patronage now existing. This, however, is a small matter—Washington has grown as fast as her business has been enlarged—as the agents of the Federal Departments have accumulated around the capital, and beyond the ratio she cannot increase her people. We know that the idle capital may occasionally be invested in a villa on some of the surrounding heights, or in a magnificent residence in the city, or the suburbs, but departures will thin the population as fast as such incidental acquisitions increase its numbers.

The point we are trying to present is,

1st. Washington has no employment for any one beyond its present population.

2d. No one will remove to a city where there is no employment for him, and consequently no one will remove to Washington.

3d. That the vacant lots and grounds in the National city cannot be in demand unless employment is found for a larger population, for who will desire a location where he cannot sustain himself—and who can sustain himself without employment?

The real estate, under these circumstances, cannot advance, or if at all, very slowly, and the plain, inevitable inference is, that Washington must find employment for a dense population before the real estate can advance or her population be enlarged, and finally to retain the National capital, Washington must become the pride and boast of the American continent.

The first step should be to secure railroad facilities radiating from the city in every direction. Amongst these a million to the Southern Maryland Railroad, and four times that amount to the Alexandria, Loudoun and Hampshire Railroad will, it is believed, be judicious investments—a branch of the latter road coming directly into the city by the way of the Chain Suspension Bridge.

The waters of Rock creek, and probably of the Potomac, should be put in requisition for milling and manufacturing purposes.

Washington should further have the best University in the world, and no cost should be spared to secure the best and most celebrated Professors. The manufactures, the importations of Washington should be of the best material and of the finest finish. It is a very difficult matter to divert trade from accustomed channels. The existing facilities for carrying it on, as well as old habit, stand in the way — Stronger inducements, superior facilities, &c., will ultimately bring about the desired result. Cultivate the will—the determination is sure to devise the way. The leading men of every profession, the masters of every art, and the *ne plus ultra* of science and literature should be found in the capital of our country. The means to effect this result are readily found when the determination to bring it about is formed. The will finds the way. Suppose the desired result accomplished, what would be immediate advance in real estate within the city, and also within the District circuit? If half the real property of the city should be necessary, this half may be safely and wisely disposed of. The other half will very soon command more than the whole does now. “Then throw away the worser part, and live the better by the other half.” The example of Liverpool is well worthy of imitation by the authorities of Washington. The works accomplished by the enterprise of that city in order to secure the trade of the Western world, will clearly point out what may be done by perseverance, and what must be done to give to Washington a rank among the greatest cities of the earth. The seeming sacrifices to be submitted to, may be justly compared to the bait of the successful angler, or the ammunition of the fortunate hunter.

The same sacrifices, if indeed they are so, must also be made by the people of south-western Maryland, for however necessary the Southern Maryland Railroad may be to Washington city, it is still more so to the region of country through which it is expected to pass. It is sometimes said that this part of Maryland needs no railroads, that the country is narrow through its entire length, with fine navigable rivers and convenient landings on either side, and consequently has easy communication by sail vessels and steamers with Baltimore and Washington, that travel and transpor-

tation are cheaper by these means than by rail, and consequently if the Southern Maryland Railroad should be put into operation, it would fail to secure the business of the country, and would ultimately be abandoned.

All this seems very plausible. The premises are undeniable and the inference appears to be inevitable however.

These conveniences and shipping facilities have existed ever since the first colonial settlements in Maryland was made, and yet the country so highly favored, seems to profit nothing by the employment of them. It may be safely asserted that south-western Maryland is poorer in exports and shipping interest than it was 100 years ago.

Allusion has already been made to the common roads of this peninsula. The loss of time and labor in traveling over them, double at least, if not quadruple the real distance.

By the use of these roads only can we enjoy our shipping facilities, and four times at least must the journey be submitted to before our commercial business is accomplished. The shipper by wagon or by rail returns with the return freight, but we go first loaded to the most convenient landing and return empty, when the crop is disposed of we again go empty, and return with the articles in which the proceeds of sales have been invested, and in addition to the travel we must needs submit to two freights, commission and several incidental expenses, and occasionally to imposition also. It is true, the producer's time at home is worth the services of the agents and incidental charges, but not so if the shipment could take place in winter, when his time is nearly valueless.

Such are the inconveniences, the drawbacks to which our inland producers are yearly, if not oftener, subjected, and with the exception of a few who live immediately adjacent to the landing, the riparian farmer fares but little better.

The steamer has virtually banished the skipper, as a freight courier, from our waters. The steamboat landings are generally from five to ten miles apart, and the riparian who lives at an intermediate point, must either take his produce to his most convenient wharf in small boats, at the risk of the weather, or wagon it around to the heads of the intervening creeks and inlets, over the worst roads generally in the country.

It must be borne in mind, in the meantime, that the Chesapeake Bay affords no shipping facilities even to the riparian farmers. The extensive flats render the building of wharves very expensive, and when built, the boats can very rarely make fast to them, while the rough weather and the worm (*tredo navalis*) very soon destroy them. These are not mere aggravations of trifling difficulties. On the contrary, it is on account of long usage alone that these hindrances and drawbacks upon industry and labor are not properly appreciated. An inland farmer in this peninsula never prospers or grows rich, save by the most rigid economy. Every inconvenience to which we as a community are subjected—all the principal drawbacks upon labor and industry that our citizens submit to—all point to one and the same cause, and all require one and the same remedy. We could have good common roads if we had a four-fold population of producing citizens, and our taxes would be reduced in proportion to the number and ability of the tax-payers. The landholder will pay taxes on unproductive land no longer than he can find trusty tenants to cultivate it, or purchasers to buy it. With a quadruple population we would have our mechanic and manufacturer of every kind amongst us. We would then have a market at home, and could transact much of commercial business without the expense of double freight and the intervention of agents and a frightful list of incidental charges. Our own neighbors would have our carrying trade, and we would have sensible and trusty laborers, guided and controlled by their own interest and judgment.

In this state of affairs, real property, for agricultural purposes, cannot be greatly in demand. Speculators may invest at low figures, but these add nothing to the prosperity of any country. In whichever way we direct our observation, the same necessity for a dense population of producing people presents itself, and it only remains to inquire how this necessity is to be met. Emigration to the new States and Territories has been thinning the population of Maryland for more than one hundred years. The war of the Revolution fell heavily upon south-western Maryland.

This section of the State suffered considerably from the plundering marauders of the British fleet during the war of 1812. The torch besides did a full share of mischief. The epidemic of that period swept off many hundreds of every age from the south-western peninsula. These drawbacks, losses and misfortunes, may also have aided in delaying the prosperity of the oldest section of the State. Emigration is in a measure suspended. Wars it is hoped are over for a time at least, and no pestilence of a fearful or general character has visited us for nearly a half century. The time, therefore, promises to be propitious for recuperation and for improvement. We entertain some delicacy in suggesting the mode of inducing immigrants to take up their abode with us. There will be some difficulty, no doubt, in diverting the tide of immigration from its wonted channels. The ship is barely moored to the wharf before her living freight is on the train for the West. The strangers give themselves no rest until they breathe the trans-Mississippi air, nor do they manifest any interest whatever in the country they travel over.

Their purposes are fixed, and the contracts likely perfected before they leave the fatherland. Inducements of considerable weight, must be held out for a while at least. The early Colonial Proprietary of Maryland, gave a bonus of 100 acres or more to every able-bodied white man that came into the Province to inhabit. Similar inducements were also held out to the other sex. The country was then a wilderness, without schools or churches, and except immediately on the navigable waters, without clearings. A crowded population at home, however, with the love of adventure; and religious intolerance, all combined to make his Lordship's 'conditions of plantation' acceptable and for a while strangers poured rapidly into the colony. This is a matter of record and is referred to as merely furnishing an idea. We want from abroad, land buyers and land workers. Both may be found in Germany. The Germans, however, will not become our tenants. Those who settle in this country bring money.

The very poor, the unenterprising and unambitious rarely emigrate from any country.

A farm of 20 or 30 acres satisfies a German. He wants no more land than he can cultivate to an advantage. But a

few years past a colony of Germans made arrangements to locate in St. Mary's county, several hundred acres of land were contracted for, be divided into 20 acre lots, and the building of the houses for the different families was on the eve of being commenced, when the entire arrangement fell through. We see no reason why a similar plan carried out in good faith should not be successful. A small gratuity of 3 acres might be thrown in if found necessary.

There is scarcely a landholder in south-western Maryland that cannot part with twice 20 acres to such a class of people, and be gainer by the transaction. Men are very slow to part with property even though profitless to them to secure mere probable advantages. The bait is of certain value, for it is so considered while the capture of the prey is doubtful. Some with more craft and selfishness, may recommend the sacrifice to others while they decline making it themselves, under the hope of reaping equal advantages with those that do. State legislation may legitimately interpose, when ignorance, selfishness and skepticism stand opposed to improvement.

Every citizen of the State is interested in the prosperity of south-western Maryland. The Marylander who feels no interest in any section but his own, is but little wiser than the seaman who cared not how soon the stern of the ship went down as long as the fore-castle was afloat.

The improvement of this peninsula would be advantageously felt by every tax-payer in the State, and by the citizens of Baltimore particularly. South-western Maryland has besides, claims upon the upper section of the State, as well as upon those of the Monumental city.

Every property holder amongst us has been paying taxes for nearly 30 years to secure to them those transportation facilities, which we are now asking for ourselves. The obligation is none the less binding from the fact that the delegation from the lower counties of the Western shore, voted, we believe, as a unit for every appropriation for the improvement of upper Maryland and to the advantage of Baltimore. The obligation is not cancelled by the late conditional appropriation of five hundred thousand dollars, for internal improvement purposes to the peninsula counties. The share

allotted to each county is insufficient to secure any real advantage to either of them, nor can the appropriation be so united to one joint fund as to construct any railroad improvement beneficial to all of them. The Patuxent river separating Calvert county from the rest cannot be bridged below Hill's Landing. All this may appear to have no connexion with the Southern Maryland Railroad. But the Company organized under the charter of that work, will be the most suitable agent to make and perfect the necessary arrangements for immigration, while in doing so, they will secure the funds required to carry on the works of our railroad. By the condition of the charter, real estate may be taken in payment for stock. Our surplus lands should therefore be assigned to the Railroad Company. Should the Directory be successful in their negotiations with foreigners, we not only secure the increase of population so much needed, but railroad facilities also.

If immigration should be once commenced to this part of Maryland, it would continue to flow in upon us until there would be no spot left untenanted. For every family that leads the way, we may safely count on ten more to follow. A quadruple population has been spoken of heretofore, but this may be doubled, and probably twice doubled, to advantage. The country is fully capable of sustaining a ten-fold population. There can be found in the whole peninsula not a spot of upland that has not been in cultivation or is now covered with timber. Some lands have been worked down by improvident terraculture, but there is not an acre of upland between Point Lookout and Washington that cannot be made capable of a profitable cultivation. For a full statement of the industrial resources, social advantages, health, climate, &c, of this region of Maryland, we refer you to the Report of Dr. Higgins. It may not be useless to add that there are very few sections of country where timber for fuel and building material is more abundant. Besides, the peninsula is well watered from end to end, and springs of excellent water are found in abundance on every plantation. The fountains spring from the heights of Good Hope, quite down to Centreville, in Prince George's county, and furnish as good drinking water as can be found in the country, or pro-

bably in the world. In addition to this, we have no overflow to contend with, and no expense in constructing mountain embankments to protect our fields. The beasts of prey have been exterminated for more than a century, and "the milk sick" of the West—the yced or grass that poisons the cow, as well as the milk and butter, was never known among us. To the owners of real estate, not only on and near the route, but throughout the entire peninsula, the road must be highly advantageous by bringing into the country a better class of laborers, as well as purchasers of their now profitless land at advanced and constantly advancing prices. On this subject permit us to refer to the Report of J. R. Trimble

The Southern Maryland Railroad will be the cause of enabling the children, the old and the decrepid, who are incapable of field labor or the workshop, to become self-sustaining, instead of being, as they now are, a tax upon the industry of their friends. They may find paying employment in gathering and carrying to the station the natural fruits of the country, as well as such other articles of light burdens as the new facilities for transportation may induce our people to cultivate. How many wild fruits, berries, grapes, nuts, &c. worthless here, but highly valued in the cities, ripen, fall, and are lost every year! How much, besides, of the fruits of the orchard are lost in the same way on every plantation!

The Southern Maryland Railroad will, we presume, aim to accommodate traffic principally. The train may consequently stop wherever the public accommodation may require. On this account we may, with good reason, expect that the labor of the country would very soon be diverted from the cultivation of bulky crops that now pay nothing, to the production of articles of easier transportation that will pay better at least, if they do not pay well, nor would it be at all extravagant to imagine that orders from the hotels, restaurants, boarding-houses and private families of the cities, should be sent daily by the down train to their respective agents and caterers along the line for the next day's supplies. The luxuries of the season, whether of the water or land, could be put on the train at Point Lookout in the forenoon, and arrive in Washington or Baltimore the same day in good time to make glad the hearts of the citizens at dinner. An improvement

that promises to bring so many advantages, and to effect so many necessary reforms—to settle our peninsula with a dense and thrifty people to work their lands now going to waste, give them the lime to fertilize it, choice of markets, Washington and Baltimore, for their garden products and fruits, cause them to divide up their now cumbersome and unwieldy farms (unprofitable because they are so) into small farms well tilled, thus enhancing their value four-fold, to reduce the burdens of taxation in the same proportion; to find paying employment for those who now are a mere burden upon their friends, to give us a home market with our manufacturers and mechanics amongst us to enable us to transact our commercial business without paying double freights, occasionally ocean freights and commissions on both the sales and purchases, fill our ports, rivers and harbors with our own shipping, to open to all and at all seasons, certain and swift communication with the Baltimore and Washington markets, as well as with the channels of travel and trade to furnish the city of Washington with daily necessities and luxuries for her growing population, and aid in retaining the National capital in its present location, to give to the inhabitants of the District as well as to the Federal Government a more certain and ready access to the open sea than can be had by the tortuous channels of the sometimes ice-bound and foggy Potomac, an improvement, we repeat, that gives so fair a promise of effecting so much for our good even if it should bring about but one-half of the advantages its friends have a reasonable right to expect, whether paying a dime on its cost or not, must virtually be one of the best paying works ever completed. One other of the great necessities for building this road as any of those mentioned, results as much from the demand of the coal interest which has been for some time gradually seeking an extensive port below the freezing point for its shipment to the market it requires.—That it must find this port either at the mouth of the Patuxent or Potomac, all who have thought on the subject, admit; that the shortest road to either of these places, whether the coal comes over the Baltimore and Ohio Road via Point of Rocks, or down the Canal, or over the Loudoun and Hamp-

shire Road, is on or near the route we have surveyed, no one looking at the maps can deny. This immense trade, already sending two millions of tons out to the markets of the world, through the Capes, will pay a handsome bonus to any road that can be built as cheap as the route we present; and if it can shorten the distance of its carriage on a down grade sixty miles, as it does, it must command a large portion of this trade. And who, looking at its rapid growth in the last few years, and the increasing demand for this kind of coal, can tell the immense revenue that will accrue to this road from this trade?

That it would be no detriment to Baltimore city, all thinking men agree, who look at her harbor, already crowded with more valuable freightage, and know that the large area now acquired by this coal trade, would be immediately occupied by some other of greater value. Point Lookout, jutting as it were into the immense oyster beds of the Chesapeake and its tributaries, is the key by which the great oyster trade would be unlocked to pour its valuable freight on a road built from thence to Washington, to be distributed at less cost than now, by enabling the immense fleet of vessels already engaged in the trade to make two or three trips where they now make one. This will be a large revenue itself to the road.

Norfolk, now rapidly growing, and destined to increase more rapidly than any city on the continent, so soon as the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad is finished, and its connections perfected to California by the El Paso route, requires a closer and quicker communication with Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York than she now has. It is to be had only over this peninsula, by a railroad to Point Lookout, thence by fast steamers, enabling passengers from New York via Baltimore and Washington, to be landed in Norfolk in fifteen hours. This, together with her early productions, seeking a Northern market, will form an important and valuable addition to the revenue of a road. Point Lookout, destined by the hand of nature to be one of the great watering places and summer resorts of this country, with a beach as fine, a surf as delightful as that of Cape

May, (without its dangerous undertow,) situated in the centre of three populous and growing cities—Baltimore, Washington and Norfolk—accessible in a few hours from each, when developed as it will be by the building of this road, would alone pay, to one so cheaply built as this can be, a handsome per cent on its cost. As proof of this, we refer to the road to Cape May. See what Cape May was a few years ago, now alone supporting a road through a country barren in comparison to the one our survey passes. Another source of revenue will be soon developed by it, as large, if not larger, than either of these mentioned—the fruit crop. This country is equally if not better adapted to fruit growing than Delaware, that now loads her road annually with its millions of boxes of peaches, paying a handsome interest on the road. Passing through a country so easily improved as ours, with some of the finest farming lands contiguous to the road on both sides of the ridge, it would also bring to these lands in large quantities, what they so much need, the lime of Washington and the Northern counties of Maryland; this would be another large item to the receipts of this road.

Any one of these freights alone, with the local trade and travel, would pay a fair per cent. on the cost of construction. It takes but a poor mathematician to calculate what a large revenue this road would receive when they are all combined. We candidly believe, that when all these interests are developed, they would pay 20 per cent. on any cost that may be required to build this road, and it will not be long before capitalists find it out. One additional inducement to build this road, is the fact that nineteen twentieths of the land owners from Point Lookout to the District line, have voluntarily offered the land for the road bed at ten dollars per acre in stock, and many have offered ties that abound on this road in sufficient quantities to build five such roads and take stock for the same. The one-twentieth who refuse the right of way belong to that class of men who, to our shame, exist in every community, with minds so narrow, and hearts so black, that they will lose the benefit themselves to prevent their neighbors from being benefitted. They should, wherever found, be marked and ostracised by every public spirited

man, until they are civilized. This right of way, so freely offered by the landholders, is a large item in the reduction of the cost of this road, when compared with the heavy tax most roads are subjected to for this privilege

These facts go to show capitalists, that this road promises to pay a larger revenue than any road of the same length in the United States

Some have said, that the building of this road to Washington would be a disadvantage to Baltimore, this is a mistaken and contracted view

Washington is the nearest, and therefore the natural market, for all our products except tobacco

The landholder makes more clear money the sooner he can get to market, and the shorter the distance he has to transport his products over. The more he makes, the more able he is to buy of Baltimore what she furnishes, and so long as Baltimore holds her own, as she promises to do for all time to come, so long will the City of Washington and these counties be dependent on her, and the more Washington city increases in population, and these counties become developed and richer, the more Baltimore will sell to them.

Therefore, directly and indirectly, Baltimore is benefitted by all the railroads that can be built in these counties, no matter where they tend

We enclose the able and efficient report of our Chief Engineer with a map and profile of the road, as showing the result of our work, and making this report as perfect as we could. The expenditure of the money entrusted to us was as follows.

To expenses of Engineer Corps	\$5 250 00
To commissary	1,050 00
To commissioners.	3,700 00
	<hr/>
	\$11,000 00
	<hr/>
CONTRA	
By cash received from State.....	10,000 00
By cash from City of Washington	1,000 00
	<hr/>
	\$11,000 00

The Chief Engineer was employed six months, and most of the corps five months and a-half

The Commissioners gave their full attention to this work Two or more of them being with the corps at all times, acting as quartermasters, or collecting facts and suggestions for the furtherance of the work entrusted to them, and the proper disbursements of the money.

And they flatter themselves, that the money has been well spent, and that the result of their work as herein reported will justify them.

The fact of events transpiring faster than was anticipated by the framers of the Act under which we derived our authority : that is, the organization of this road, and the prospect of its being built at once, does not lessen the value of our work, or take away from the wisdom of the framers of the Act, for all is the result of our survey and the suggestions obtained by it

When the Act was framed, we believed it was done for the purpose of obtaining a report to show capitalists, and those interested, how cheaply this road could be built, and how handsomely it would pay, and the necessity for building it, that the State intended to incur this expense for that purpose; and if she induced capitalists to build this road by this means the money would be well expended in the development of those counties that had never before received any help from the State towards internal improvements. This result is now being worked out; the road being organized and in able hands, and, as we before said, is the consequence of this survey. Because one of the Commissioners, acting as agent of the incorporators of this road, has used the suggestions herein reported in speeches and letters to capitalists, and induced them to subscribe to the stock the amount required by law to organize it, which he could not have done so effectively without the knowledge obtained by this survey

That the outlay as proposed by those who have it now in charge, is so much larger than the reports here made, does not add or detract from the correctness of our report, because they contemplate expending a large sum to make the harbor at Point Lookout perfect, and are preparing for a coal trade

much larger than ever was contemplated by any of us —
Therefore both are correct, and we have every reason to believe, that the State and city, by the speedy building of the road and the development of both city and counties, will soon be handsomely remunerated for the expense they have incurred. All of which is

Respectfully submitted by

Your obedient servants,

C. J. DURANT, Ch'mn
GEO. W. MORGAN,
L. W. B. HUTCHINS,
J. G. CHAPMAN,
JOHN BOWLING

L E T T E R
OF
BENJAMIN TIPPETT.

To C J Durant and others, Commissioners appointed to provide for the Survey of the route of the Southern Maryland Railroad.

GENTLEMEN: The accompanying estimates show approximately the cost of a Railroad from Point Lookout, in St. Mary's county, to the Eastern Branch of the Potomac river at Benning's bridge.

The Survey was made, in the first place, to connect with that of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad at the head waters of Mattaponi Creek, near Brandywine, in Prince George's county. The cost of both lines has been estimated, and the result is hereby submitted

The former line is 76.4-10, and the latter 60.7-10 miles in length. The cost of construction on the line from Point Lookout to the head waters of Mattaponi is estimated at \$203,182, or \$3,375 per mile, and on the other, known as "the adopted line," at \$331,535, or \$4,709 per mile.

The difference in the cost of construction on the two lines per mile is owing chiefly to the heavy earth-work between the point of their divergence and Benning's bridge. Though less than one-fourth of the entire distance, more than two-fifths of the work of graduation on the whole line, will be found on this part. This, in connection with the bridging necessary on this portion of the line, and the heavy land damages to be submitted to within and near the District limits, clearly designates this as by far the most costly part of the contemplated work, independently of bridging the Eastern Branch, and the right of way beyond.

The foregoing figures include only the cost of construction, or the work to be done preparatory to laying the track. The

total cost from Point Lookout to the Baltimore and Potomac line is set down in the estimates at \$887,818, or \$14,748 per mile, and from Point Lookout to Benning's bridge at \$1,200,159, or \$15,709 per mile

These figures embrace the usual allowance for shrinkage of embankment as well as for contingencies and engineering expenses; and the grand totals, it is believed, will be amply sufficient to put the respective lines into operation.

It is true, that estimates upon preliminary surveys rarely, if ever, cover the actual cost of works of this kind, but this is owing to circumstances which will not be likely to occur in the construction and completion of the Southern Maryland Railroad.

There can be no reason to apprehend any advance in the price of labor or materials. No solid rock will be met with in the necessary cuts, for none has ever been reached on the entire route, and running upon the highest ridge in the peninsula, as our line does, it is barely possible that the shallow excavations will ever uncover hidden fountains, and involve thereby much trouble from land-slides, or in obtaining a firm and solid road bed.

Indeed, it is probable that the estimates are rather in excess of the real cost. They are liberal—made up without the wish to lead capitalists or others into unsafe conclusions. Full allowance has been made for a first-class road, for the best materials, and for faithful and skillful mechanical labor.

Various substitutions may be resorted to in the construction at a considerable reduction of the estimated cost. The ties, in many cases, can be paid for in stock; other necessary timber can be obtained on the same terms, and the right of way also. Considerable cash outlay may be avoided by burning the necessary bricks along the line, convenient to points where they will be needed. The fuel for this purpose will cost but little outside of the cutting and hauling.

In addition to this, the preliminary survey was designedly made up of long tangents, thereby encountering many elevations and depressions, that may be avoided on location, without sensibly increasing the distance. In some cases, also, the distance may be diminished without incurring heavy work, or steeper grades.

The grade will be light on the entire line, mostly from 0.20 to 0.50 per chain, or from 10 to 25 feet per mile, rarely exceeding the latter, but frequently falling below the former figure. The steepest inclines occur where we enter into, and leave the valley of Piscataway creek, and in descending from the heights of Good Hope to the Eastern Branch. All of these may be improved by a change of route.

Very few of the curves will be objectionable. Nearly the entire line may be run over at the maximum speed, without any elevation of the outer rail.

It must be unnecessary to give a particular description of the route of the survey. The Commissioners are mostly as well acquainted with the entire line, as the engineers. It may be indicated almost in a word as lying along the summit of upland that rises between the head of the Potomac drainage on the one hand, and that of the Chesapeake bay and Patuxent river on the other. Until it reaches The Long Old Fields or Forrestville, the line rarely deviates from this ridge or divide, and then only for economical considerations, or when, on account of interlocking streams, the curve of the heights was inconvenient.

Several objections to this route are urged by the friends of the enterprise. That it is neither direct nor central is undeniable; that it will require less grading and masonry than any other that can be selected is equally certain.

A more central location is recommended, not only because it would be more direct, and therefore shorter, but, also, because the road, if built, should pass through those sections of the country where facilities for transportation and travel are most needed, and where it would therefore be most likely to be patronized. Prudence, in the mean time, having an eye on the cost, as well as upon the resources and capacity of the country to afford a paying patronage.

Several midland routes have been suggested. Personal reconnaissance on some of them has occupied considerable time, but no reliable opinion as to eligibility could be arrived at without the aid of instruments. Crossing, as they must do, the drainage of the Potomac slope, and that, too, above the confluence of the water-courses, the cost of graduation, masonry and bridging must necessarily be considerable. It is however very

probable that the road would pay better on the central or air-line route, and should it do this, it would be a cheaper one in the end, let the cost be what it may.

Near Brandywine the inducements to adopt a central route become more weighty. As we approach this point, we approach also the located line of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad, and after running in close proximity to it for several miles, we cross it in sharp obliquity, and then recede from it as we approached it. Indeed, from the estate known as the "Woodyard" to Mattawoman Branch, the two lines are scarcely three miles apart at any point.

Either of these roads will be amply sufficient to accommodate all the traffic and travel of this region of country, and should both of them be completed on the lines now surveyed, the cost of one must, to this extent, be a waste of capital.

This objection may be partly obviated on our part by continuing the first line from its junction with that of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad to Piscataway Creek, near the estate of H. P. Hill, where the course of that stream changes from a southerly to a W. S. W. direction, and after gaining the heights beyond, by following an air line as nearly as practical and economical, across the head waters of Piney Run and Tinker's Branch—crossing Henson's Branch near Temple's beautiful estate, thence by Suit's princely residence, and by Mrs. Young's to Oxen Run, at the point where our preliminary line leaves the valley of that stream to find a passage through the heights of Good Hope, in the depression near Burch's tavern.

It is true, that for a few miles on this route the face of the country is quite broken, compared with that previously passed over, it is *very* rough, but after passing Piscataway creek, all serious difficulties will be surmounted. The country beyond quite up to Henson's Branch, as also between that stream and Oxen Run, is fully as even and firm as any that our preliminary line passes over, excepting only the southern extremity of St. Mary's county.

It may be said further that this route traverses a populous part of Prince George's county, remote from navigable waters as well as from all railroads in existence or in contempla-

tion, and cursed as the entire peninsula generally is, with proverbially bad common roads, roads with deep ruts and miry beds in the thaws of winter and in the early part of spring, and with short heavy grades at all seasons, passable for loaded vehicles only in frozen weather when navigation is suspended, and in summer and autumn when team and teamster are too necessary in making and securing the present crop to take the previous one to market or the landing.

By adopting this route, we shun the heavy sections at Mattaponi, (the heaviest on the whole line,) and at Mrs Brooks', the bridges over Piscataway creek and its tributaries, besides two of the heavy grades already alluded to

It is true, that heavy work as well as bridging and high grades may be met with on the line now suggested, but assurance is given by parties amply competent to make the assurance good, that subscriptions will be forthcoming on the latter route, fully sufficient to overcome the frightful difficulties at Piscataway Creek or Burch's Swamp, as well as to grade and bridge beyond Henson's Branch

There arise so many conflicting considerations in making choice of route, that one is sometimes disposed to doubt if the *best* line for a road of any kind has ever yet been selected, except possibly for a short distance, or where the hand of nature had left no room for choice.

The foregoing suggestions, I am aware, should properly be laid before the directory, after a permanent location of the road is determined on. I deem it prudent, however, to give place to them here, and, before dropping this subject, I beg leave to suggest further, a change of route after passing the heights of Good Hope. Instead of running between Marshall's dwelling house and barn, continue the line down the valley between Marshall's and Brooks', keeping upon the western slope, to the main stream, and thence (working all the while as near to the necessary grade as practicable and judicious,) through the secondary ridge, near Dean's dwelling house, and over the estate lately the property of Jas. E. S. Holliday, and by Mrs. Sheriff's residence to the eastern branch near Benning's bridge.

By taking this route, the double or reversed curve at the Red House, and at Marshall's, may be avoided, and both the