

power, are not of unfrequent occurrence; and if it should be admitted that the maximum rate, is not too high for general purposes, it is very obvious, that in many cases, it may and ought to be reduced, if by that means the business of the road might be increased, and its income augmented.

The Legislature itself, has acted upon this principle, and in the act of 1836, chapter 261, authorised the board of directors to reduce the rate of tolls from time to time, in their discretion, for passengers upon the Washington road, by carrying them from the respective cities of Washington and Baltimore on the same day, for a less sum than is authorised by the act of 1832. To the extent allowed by this act, the discretion confided to the board, has been beneficially exercised; but the law itself is defective in requiring the passengers to go and return on the same day, thereby excluding a source of travel between the two cities which might be much increased, and made a source of much profit, if the discretion of the board should be so enlarged as to allow more time for the performance of the journey. It is known, that upon many of the roads, both in the North and South, a period of five days, is allowed for this purpose, with great advantage to the companies adopting the rule, and no reason is perceived why the same discretion should not be confided to the board of directors of this company, to meet other cases of equal, or of greater importance. Indeed, the actual experience of the company, would seem to make it almost indispensable.

At the date of my communication to the Governor of the 2nd of August last, the competition which at that time was supposed to divert the travel from the road was confined to the bay line of boats, from Baltimore to Norfolk. I did not then, nor do I now, venture to express the opinion that this competition would effectually counteract the rivalry, or, increase the aggregate revenue and the experiment might possibly shew that in this respect it would be more expedient to adhere to the maximum rate of charge. I pretend only to suggest, that the occasion is such as to require the experiment to be made, and that the Legislature would consult the best interests of the State in conferring authority for that purpose. Certainly, it cannot be supposed that the Board of Directors would persevere in a low rate of charge, if it should be found to lessen their income, or, that if they should be so disposed, the Legislature, with the power to prevent, would permit it to be done.

It becomes my duty to state, however, that since the date of my letter to the Governor a new source of competition has arisen, which threatens, if not in some way counteracted, seriously to interfere with the travel upon the road. A line of stages for the conveyance of passengers between the cities of Washington and Baltimore, was placed upon the Turnpike road about the 7th of October last, and has ever since been running in opposition to the Rail Road. This line conveys passengers from one city to the other for two dollars, and from October to the 29th January, inclusive, conveyed one thousand and eight passengers, which other-