

Lexington Va:

26 Feb'y '66

My dear Sir

The extension of the Vir'a Central R.R. to the Ohio river, is so important to the state; that I cannot but hope, that measures will be adopted by the Legislature during its present session to accomplish it. So much of the work has been executed, and the benefits when completed made so apparent; that I believe if proper steps should be taken, sufficient funds could be obtained for the purpose in Europe, if they cannot be procured in this country. By giving assurance of the regular payment of the interest, and the final payment of the principal, capitalists will be found anxious to extend loans to the need. This I think could be done out of the revenue of the present extent of the road.

I understand that traveling East from the Ohio, the steepest grade will be 29 ft: to the mile. What an immense train, loaded with the products of the West, could brought to the waters of the Atlantic, by a single engine, over this route!

If in addition to this road, the James River & Kanawha Canal; & the other R. roads, projected or partially executed could be extended or finished, a great impetus would be given to the improvement & advancement of the State No portion need fear that injury will result to it, from building these avenues of trade and travel. The experience of other states & countries, show that all will be benefited; and the surest way to improve Richmond; in the prosperity of which any citizen of Va; is deeply interested; is to improve all portions of the state. The capital of no country can flourish, unless the country itself thrives & prospers.

Very resp'y

Your obt Servt

R. E. Lee

Col. J. B. Baldwin