

**Philadelphia Central R. R.**

The route for this new line from Baltimore to Philadelphia has been surveyed and will be permanently located in a short time. The new road will leave the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore line at Stemmer's run, thence passing through the twelfth and eleventh districts, it will cross the Belair road at Mr. Brooks' and the Gunpowder river at Mr. John Fox's saw mill. It will prove of immense advantage to that section of our country in developing the fine water power found there, and lining the streams with mills and factories.—*Towsontown Union.*

**Western Maryland R. R.**

The annual meeting of the stockholders of this company was held at Westminster on the 18th inst. Three directors were elected to serve for the ensuing year, viz: Nathan Engler, Augustus Shriver, and Granville S. Haines. The directors elected are those who acted in that capacity for the past three years, are the friends of Captain Robert Irwin, president of the company, and his re-election for another twelve months is thus secured. Prior, however, to the hour of voting, a resolution was offered by Captain Irwin, to the effect that the recent act of the Legislature, authorizing the Mayor of Baltimore to appoint two directors upon the part of that city in said road, who, after being confirmed by the City Council, shall represent Baltimore's interests therein, was unanimously accepted. The appointees under this resolution are Samuel McCubbin and John W. Randolph, Esqs. They hold their office for one year from date.

The annual report of the president, including the reports of the superintendent and treasurer, was read to the meeting. It shows the business and financial condition of the road for the past year. In brief stands as follows:

Gross earnings .....	\$105,131 66
Gross expenses :	
Operating road .....	\$57,854 75
Construction .....	10,585 58
Tools for engines and cars, and roads and shops .....	2,083 39
	\$70,523 72
Residue .....	\$34,607 92
By the treasurer's report it is shown that the gross receipts, including the residue of last year, are .....	\$128,542 81
And his disbursements .....	120,332 96
Residue, Sept. 30, 1865 .....	\$8,209 85

Through freights on produce have fallen off somewhat, yet the increase on passengers over the previous year amounts to \$20,309 69, which promises well for the future of this work as it progresses. There are evidences also of an increase henceforward in freight tonnage.

The president in his report strongly and earnestly advocates the extension of the road to Hagerstown. In view of this fact he shows enough money, wanting only about \$200,000, has already been guaranteed in the way of endorsements and subscriptions, to justify putting the work under contract. In reference to the obtaining of the comparatively small sum, either from Baltimore in her corporate capacity or from individuals, he has no doubt. It would make altogether over \$1,100,000 guaranteed toward the extension; enough almost, if not entirely, to complete the work.

He also advises against all "entangling alliances" calculated to interfere in any way with the legitimate objects and purposes of this truly Maryland enterprise—that no combination be permitted to wrest it from the exclusive management in the future, as in the past, of those who would have its uses subservient to citizens along its line and to the present stockholders.

The report also speaks favorably of the Gwynn's Falls road, likewise of a third track on the Northern Central, from the Relay House to Bolton depot, and finds no objection to laying a track to Canton. It is in favor of all enterprises which may tend to enhance trade and prove of convenience to the people. An independent road from the Relay House to Baltimore, which will obviate the dependence of the Western Maryland upon the Northern Central, as at present, is strongly urged as an unavoidable necessity.

**Steam Traction Engines on the Plains.**

We published in our last an article on the Overland Traction Engine Company of this city, the object of whose organization is the transportation by steam power of trains of wagons across the plains between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains upon the ordinary roads of the country. Since then we have read the report of A. P. Robinson, Esq., who has been engaged this summer in exploring a section of the country immediately south of the Platte River for the purpose of determining the practicability of adopting these engines upon or near the present main line of travel. The points of departure for the transportation to Denver City and its vicinity as well as for the North Platte and the countries west of the Rocky Mountains are: Kansas City, Leavenworth City, Fort Leavenworth, Atchison, St. Joseph, Nebraska City and Omaha. From Kansas City a direct route extends to Denver City via Fort Riley and the Smoky Hill Fork, but owing to the difficulties with the Indians and to the absence of Government protection this route has not been used to any considerable extent. From all the points named, however, routes extend to the Platte River centering in the neighborhood of Fort Kearney, from which station one general road is adopted as far as Post Junction, a military post on the Platte about 85 miles east of Denver. From this post to Denver are two routes, one called the "cut off," forming a chord to the great bend of the Platte, while the other follows the general course of the river.

Between Fort Kearney and Denver City are various fords by which routes diverge to the North Platte, Fort Laramie, Fort Collins, Bridgers Pass, and so on to points west of the mountains. The stages, however, run by way of Denver, and their entire travel is carried from Post Junction, southwest to that city, and thence northward via Golden City and Central City to Fort Collins, the whole distance around to the latter point being about 170 miles, while an excellent route exists running direct from Post Junction up the Platte to the mouth of the Cache le Poudre River, and up that stream to the Fort the whole distance being only about 70 miles. By inspection of the map it will be seen that the distance is less from Nebraska City to Denver City, than from any of the other points named on the south of the Platte River. The direction of the Missouri River is northwest and southeast, and mathematically a point on this river due east of Denver must be nearer to that city than points lower down. By a right line there would be but little difference between Omaha and Nebraska City, but Omaha lies above the mouth of the Platte, and consequently any route from that city must either cross the Platte by a difficult and expensive bridge, or a dangerous ford, or follow its meanderings on the northerly side and cross the Loup Fork, the North Platte and other streams, involving also expensive

bridges, or bad fords. Fording is besides at times absolutely impossible. The Platte has no tributaries of consequence on the south side, and during a great portion of the time there are but two, viz., Salt Creek within about 20 miles of its mouth, and Beaver Creek about 100 miles from Denver, which have any water in them at all. These are both small streams, easily bridged. The others are merely dry sandy beds crossed without trouble. For a distance of 75 miles west of Nebraska City the present stage route crosses many streams which take their rise near the Platte and run southward; but the divide between their sources and the Platte may be followed, furnishing a nearly level route to Fort Kearney, crossing only one of the streams named (Salt Creek.) This is the route of the old California trail, and it is still used to a great extent for heavy loads, although for the great majority of the trains the stage line is adopted on account of the saving of distance. Unlike the process of locating our eastern roads which to avoid undulation must follow the vallies, the engineer on these great prairies, to find level roads must follow these divides.

The country for 75 miles west of Nebraska City is a rolling prairie capable of cultivation, well watered by the various streams running southward, on the immediate banks of which there is a considerable growth of timber. Beyond this the country becomes arid and dry. Timber disappears and no streams are found until the Platte is reached at Nebraska City junction, about 43 miles east of Fort Kearney. It is at this point that the direct stage route and the old California trail join. Following this latter route to this point not a grade exceeding 3 feet per 100 need be encountered, and not a particle of grading is required except upon the first four miles from Nebraska City. For this distance a new road involving a trivial amount of work will be required. The Platte River is a shallow stream varying from a half mile to one mile in width with a quicksand bed, and is full of islands of all shapes and sizes. These have generally more or less timber and bushes upon them, but not a particle of wood is found upon the main land until arriving within 50 miles of Denver City. The river meanders through a bottom of variable width sometimes as great as 20 miles. This bottom is bordered by an undulating ridge called "the bluffs" varying from 50 to 100 feet in height. Back from the bluffs is a dry undulating plain covered with a sparse growth of grass and weeds. The entire descent in the Platte from Denver City to its mouth is about 3,000 feet, (or less than 5 feet per mile) very uniformly distributed. No difficulty is therefore experienced in the selection of a route substantially level except at special points where ravines are met with, or where the river has washed away the bottom lands and encroached upon the bluffs. These in a few cases as at "O'Fallon's Bluff," and at Fremont's Orchard, are washed down into perpendicular faces of cemented sand more than 100 feet high, and it is necessary to take to the plains south of them.

Indeed for most of the way this higher ground would furnish a magnificent road, the only necessity for adhering to a route nearer the river being for the purpose of obtaining grass and water. The soil of the bottom lands is an alkaline clay,