sion of their hinterland but here, too, difficulties arose, chief among them the geological fact that it was impossible to build a canal directly linking Baltimore with the West. Since major canal projects were out of the question for Baltimore, the city had to content itself with the support of a number of smaller projects usually connected with the Susquehanna and with constant expressions of hostility and apprehension about its old rival Philadelphia and a newer threat, Georgetown—both of which seemed in a position to benefit from canals to the West.

The only immediate alternative to canals was a road, and it was a logical alternative since Baltimore was located at one end of the first continuous road between the seaboard and the Midwest—the Cumberland Road. In 1818 this road reached Wheeling and, unsatisfactory as it was from many points of view, it did provide Baltimore with access to the West at a relatively early date. It took 16 to 18 days to get from Baltimore to Wheeling and six-horse teams with Conestoga wagons were used on a regular schedule, sometimes traveling day and night, to get goods back and forth. It was the railroad, however, which ultimately gave Baltimore its best chance at an enlarged hinterland. Merchants in Baltimore recognized this and were quick to support plans for a railroad, the Baltimore and Ohio, which was incorporated and on which work was begun just after the terminal date of this discussion, in 1827.

As Mr. Bjork's statistics indicate, the search for new markets, whether overseas or in the West, did not help Baltimore's trade to any great extent between 1815 and 1825. It took time for new patterns of trade for the city to develop and to crystallize. By the 1840's and 1850's they had, bringing to Baltimore an expanded overseas trade, especially with South America in coffee, hides. and guano; the long-sought connection with the West by rail which not only put Baltimore in touch with western markets but also produced an unexpected dividend in the form of the rich western Maryland mineral deposits; and finally the economic domination of Chesapeake Bay, for with the development of steam transport on the Bay and the rise of fruit and vegetable growing and the oyster-canning industry, all the Bay came to look upon Baltimore as its economic leader.