

work could be done, and when at length the season became more propitious the operation of the contractors were unexpectedly retarded by the great scarcity of laborers. Every exertion was made to increase the force employed; but it was found that from the number of public works which were carried on in different parts of the country, the demand for hands was greater than could be supplied. Towards the latter part of the summer, however, the healthiness of the country along the line of our works attracted many from less favored districts, and for some months past the construction of the road has advanced with energy and rapidity. Upon many sections the graduation and masonry are nearly completed, and throughout the line the amount of work done bears witness to the zeal and diligence of the contractors. The bridges which will be of wood, upon the plan of Col. Long, are also preparing; and the board have the fullest confidence, that long before the period shall arrive for their next annual report, they will have announced the opening of a direct and regular channel of communication with Pittsburgh, and all the widely extended country which is intersected by the great works of Pennsylvania. The accompanying report of the chief engineer will show more particularly the character and amount of the work done on the different sections of the road.

In the month of December last, contracts were made in England for the whole quantity of iron rails which will be required, including an amount sufficient to lay down a new track from Baltimore to Timonium. For, since the construction of that road, experience has shewn that true economy prescribes the use of a rail of strength sufficient to bear locomotive engines of considerable weight, whilst it can, at the same time, be laid down with much less timber than was formerly employed. That adopted by the board is a modification of the T rail designed by I. Trimble, chief engineer of the company, which has been highly approved by those qualified to judge of its merits. Being of the weight of nearly 60 lbs. to the yard, it will be simply laid upon wooden sleepers, or stone blocks, dispensing entirely with the string piece. A very heavy and constant source of expense in the annual repairs required upon the wooden superstructure of a rail road, far exceeding the interest upon the additional cost