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*Answer to Queries, &c.—Benjamin H. Latrobe's answer to Mr. McLane.*

*Engineer's Office BALT. & OHIO RAIL ROAD,  
Baltimore, December 19, 1839.*

To LOUIS McLANE, Esq., Pres., &c.

Sir,

The following replies to the queries proposed by you, and contained in the accompanying paper, marked A, are respectfully submitted:

1st. How much of the road between Harper's Ferry and Cumberland is now under contract?

The graduation, masonry and bridging of the entire line of 96 9-10 miles, in length, from the Harper's Ferry viaduct to the Turnpike in the town of Cumberland, are now under contract, excepting the first section at Harper's Ferry, of about 1½ miles in length, for which proposals have been received, and will be submitted to the board a few days hence.

What is the estimated cost of it, and what amount has already been expended?

The estimated cost of the graduation, masonry and bridging necessary to make the road ready for the rails is, (at the *contract prices*,) \$1,563,957; add to which, (for a single rail track laid with the plate rail) 96 9-10 miles, at \$4,600 per mile = \$445,740, and the estimated cost appears to be \$2,009,697, of which, has been already paid, \$148,527; leaving still to be paid \$1,861,170. Should a heavier rail than the plate rail, such as is used on the present road east of Harper's Ferry, be adopted by the board, an increase of cost in the track, proportioned to the increased weight of the rail, its fastenings, foundation, &c. will be the result.

2d. What is the estimated cost of the road from Cumberland to Wheeling, and how much has been expended on that route?

The estimated cost, from a point near Cumberland to the east bank of the Ohio, at Wheeling, is, as exhibited in Table VII, at the end of the "Report on the Surveys," &c. of Feb. 14, 1838, \$3,819,254, the plate rail being used in the track; and for any heavier rail and structure, a proportionate increase of cost being allowed.

There has been nothing expended west of Cumberland, excepting for preliminary surveys and location of the road.

I am, most respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

BENJ. H. LATROBE,  
*Engineer of Location and Construction.*