

[C.]

*Copy of Charles B. Fisk's Letter, to Thomas Turner, Clerk, December
21st, 1840.*

Washington, Dec. 21st, 1840.

Dear Sir :—Yesterday (Sunday) evening came to hand your letter of the 16th inst., (post marked the 17th.)

On the 28th of September last, I received at Cumberland in due course of mail, the order of the Board, of the 26th of that month, directing that my services as chief engineer of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company, should terminate with the 30th of the same month.

Having been at that time, in the employ of the canal company in different grades of engineer service, continuously, for twelve years and one month, and there being many questions relating to unfinished business, with which I had been more or less connected, particularly, during the latter part of my service; there being also various papers, notes, memoranda, &c. that were then incomplete, owing to circumstances *beyond my control*, (which I will not now detail) and that could not pass from my hands unexplained without prejudice, it might be, to those whose interests had been to some considerable extent entrusted for a time to my charge; and under such circumstances, having but two days given to me by the Board for the arrangement, preparation and explanation of papers, and so short a time too being allowed, without any previous intimation from the Board that my dismissal was about to take place; and in addition, all this occurring with such attendant circumstances as forbid all intercourse with the present head of the company or the individual named as my successor; under all these circumstances, and knowing that in the two remaining days of my continuance in service, I could not do what would be considered even as a commencement of what was necessary,—I concluded that my proper course was to leave in the office such few papers &c., as could pass from my hands without prejudice to the interests of any individual or of the company, and which required no explanation, and to take the others with me to Washington where the canal office then was, for the purpose of arrangement and of written explanation at my earliest convenience and leisure. Having much to do at the time, my directions were necessarily general to Mr. Bryan, who assisted me in putting up the papers, and I have no doubt that some papers, field books &c., may have been taken, needing no explanation from me, that might have been left, but which at the same time cannot by possibility be needed for reference for a year or more if ever, and which therefore, it was thought best should occupy their proper place along side of the other papers, &c., to which I proposed giving my attention so soon as time should permit.

The papers destined for Washington, were placed in boxes along