

CUMBERLAND, January 31st, 1845.

To the Hon. W. B. CLARKE,

Chairman of the select committee of enquiry.

DEAR SIR,—Your interrogatories dated yesterday, have been received and I answer to your questions as follows:

To your first interrogatory which is as follows: Are you a dealer in coal and how long have you been so? I answer I am, and have been engaged in the coal trade about ten years.

To your second interrogatory. Have you transported any coal to market by the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road, and to what extent, and how are you pleased with it as a carrier of coal to market? I answer, I have transported some coal from here to Dam No. 6, since the switch has been constructed at Dam No. 6 by the Rail Road company, but the inconveniences were so great that I was glad when I got through with the delivery of a lot of eight or nine thousand bushels, and I would not willingly undertake to transport another lot in the same way.

To your third interrogatory. Whether I would undertake to deliver, say 15,000 tons of coal at New York city or any other point on the sea board, at a certain time by the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road, as far as Dam No. 6, and thence by the Canal? I answer, I would not undertake to deliver that quantity of coal by that conveyance. I would not be subject to the inconveniences and run the risks for all the profits I could realise, and in addition to all the other difficulties, I have to pay the freight in advance ninety cents per ton, on my coal before I could get my coal started. Whereas, in the Canal I could load my boats, start all together—act as my own agent—pay no money until I get to my point of destination—put my hay, oats and provisions into my boats and thus carry my coal to market, living in my boats until I return—thus enabling me to get my coal to market without paying out one cent of money save the toll, and the toll I would not pay until I had realised something to pay with from the proceeds of my coal. By the Rail Road to Dam No. 6, no man can carry on a trade to any extent unless he can command a considerable capital, and all our coal dealers who could not command capital (and very few of them can command capital sufficient) have been prevented from going on with their business.

To your fourth interrogatory. Asking whether I would undertake to deliver the same quantity at the same point or points by the Canal if it were finished to Cumberland? I answer, I would be very glad of the chance of a contract of that size if the Canal were finished to Cumberland, and would be very willing to contract to deliver five times that quantity at any point on the sea-board. If I had such a contract I would have my own boats—my own horses—a few boys along, with whom I would proceed myself—taking my provisions for myself, my laborers and my horses. I could start my boats whenever it suited me. If any accident took place to detain me I would be at no great expense. I could set my hands to some other employment until I was prepared to start. If on the