

The policy of the Board, in placing the tunnel and the deep cut at Old Town under contract one year since, is now apparent to every one acquainted with the localities and difficulties, and the time required to surmount them. It is now confidently believed that the progress made on these difficult sections will ensure their completion in time for their connexion with the more extended works between Cacapon and Cumberland. The Board has very recently visited the entire line from tide water to Cumberland, and take pleasure in stating that the works have progressed with as much expedition as, under existing circumstances, could reasonably have been expected. The deep cut at Old Town is in a state of great forwardness, fully meeting the expectations of the Board, and justifying the belief above expressed of its early completion. The preparatory works at the tunnel, being deep cuts at the upper and lower points, have also been prosecuted with great spirit by the enterprising contractor who has undertaken the work. At the upper end, the deep cut is finished to the entrance of the tunnel, on which operations will immediately commence, and be conducted without cessation both by day and night, the working parties being relieved every eight hours. The contractor, through an agent sent for the purpose to England, has succeeded in procuring a number of practical miners, and is in daily expectation of their arrival.

He has also commenced making bricks for the arch of the tunnel, of excellent materials, found in the immediate vicinity, and employs an approved patent machine for the purpose of tempering and moulding them. Should the Board at any time have reason to doubt the ability of the contractor to accomplish the undertaking, in order that the whole line may be simultaneously opened from Cumberland to Cacapon, it will be entirely practicable to hasten the operation by a division of the labor, not confined to the two extremes only, but also to operate near the centre, by the means of two shafts at favorable points of depression in the mountain, the one ninety, the other one hundred and fifty feet in depth, thus employing six parties instead of two. The length of the tunnel will be one thousand yards, its breadth 24 feet, and its height from the bottom of the canal to the crown of the tunnel is nearly four hundred feet. The entire distance occupied by the deep cuts and tunnel across the neck of land is one mile, and the saving of distance by this improvement, instead of following the course of the river is five miles. avoiding precipitous cliffs of rock, falling into deep water, where the canal must necessarily have been made at great cost and hazard.

The material through which the excavation is to be made consists of blue slate, in elliptical strata, with very slight, if any, admixture of earth or other substance. The same formation is presented at both ends of the tunnel line, thereby indicating that no other description of rock will be encountered. This we deem a most favorable omen,