Letters to the Editor

Ice Jams at Niagara

Sir,—Referring to your editorial comment, entitled "Ice Jams at Niagara," on page 83 of your July 26th issue.

Truthfulness is, of course, far better than consistency, but in this case I can fortunately be both truthful and consistent, for I have always contended that the Thomson-Porter plan is the only project which will preserve the beauty of the Niagara.

All the other schemes will either destroy the falls or the rapids or both; while we will preserve the falls; make the whirlpool bigger and grander by increasing the depth

companying plan showing the location will be of much interest to many of your readers.

Almost everyone remembers the lower Niagara River as running through a narrow gorge which is about 500 feet wide at the waterline and about 1,000 feet between the top of the banks, standing from 300 to 350 feet above the water; and they realize the naturally great difficulty of a dam in such a location.

They do not notice, or else forget, the place called Foster's Flats, a beautiful spot on the Canadian side, where there is quite a low shelf, with easy slope to the top of the bank. As a boy I visited this place every year, as it was and is still noted for its wild flowers, and also used to abound in rattlesnakes.

A glance at Foster's Flats on the map will show at once how this simplifies our work; more than half of our dam can be built on dry land. This first half will then afford an easy means of diverting the water from the

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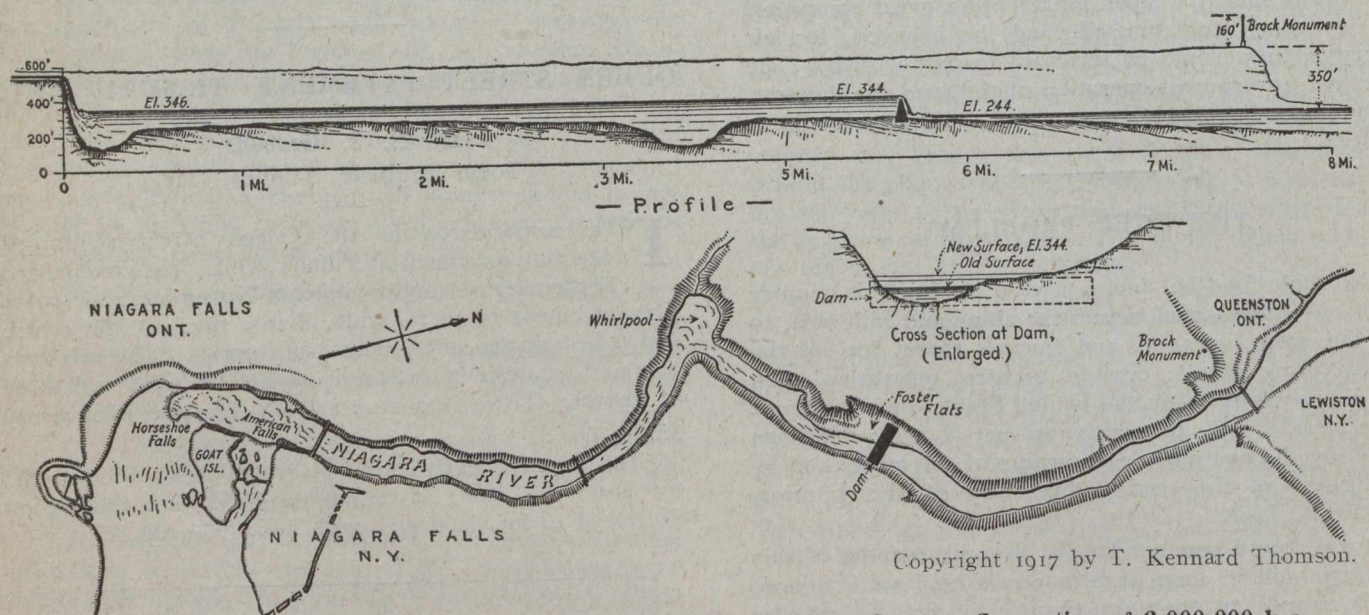
General Plan of Niagara Falls Dam, Thomson-Porter Cataract Co., for Generation of 2,000,000 h.p.

from 160 to 210 feet; and change, but not destroy, the scenery of the rapids. If necessary, we can make new and much more spectacular rapids after our dam is completed. We will also be able to supply the maximum amount of power at the minimum cost.

We offer the province and state each an annual rental of one thirty-second of a cent per kilowatt-hour as developed, or $2,000,000 a year each. We offer to sell out at cost plus a reasonable interest when either country wants to buy its half.

We would also be willing to pay, say, one one-hundred-and-twenty-eighth of one cent per kilowatt-hour, or $500,000 a year, to an international park commission to preserve and enhance the beauty of both shores of the entire river.

All the other projects combined will be unable to develop as much power as ours, in spite of the vandal-like destruction of scenery they would cause; and all of the money spent for such undertakings will simply be money thrown away, from the consumer's standpoint, when the Thomson-Porter dam is completed.

As nearly every engineer I have spoken to recently, and many laymen, have asked me how I am going to build my dam in the Niagara River, I think that the ac-

present channel before building the rest of the dam, where the water now flows.

There is a 102-foot drop in the Niagara River from the base of the old falls to Lewiston, with a minimum flow of 220,000 cubic feet per second. Now, this total head and volume should be developed as a unit—in my one large dam. Otherwise the public would have to pay for a number of disconnected power plants which could not develop anything like the full value of the river, and would result ultimately in the destruction of all the power plants below the falls by ice. The most economical method in developing the river, of course, is to use as much water at the falls as the governments will allow, afterwards returning the water to the river directly below the falls so that it can be used over again at our proposed new falls made by the dam at Foster's Flats.

Regarding other plans: Why build canals on the top of the bank—which it will be difficult to make safe? Besides, much valuable land will be destroyed; many bridges, etc., will be required. When nature has given us such a magnificent channel in the gorge of the Niagara River, with banks (from the bottom of the river to the top) from 350 to 500 feet in height, why do we refuse it? Moreover, we all know that the power is directly pro-