

lesser timber trestle bridges have been filled with earth in the removal of materials from adjacent cuttings where it was not required for widening embankments. A great many of the smaller trestle bridges should be filled within a year or two, and the long trestles, where practicable, should be divided by prisms of earth to reduce the risk of loss by fire and to prevent excessive delays should fires occur. All of the existing timber trestle bridges on this section were planned and built as permanent structures of this class, and I regard all of them as entirely safe, with proper precautions against fire; but all bridges, however substantial, must be recognized as, to some extent, danger points, and any reduction in their number will result in a saving in working expenses, and at the same time improve the general character and reputation of the line. An estimate of the cost of filling the smaller trestle bridges will be submitted to the Board at an early date. Two iron spans with masonry piers are being added to the Big Pic Bridge, in place of timber trestle work, and the long trestle approach to this bridge, which is the most important on the Lake Superior Section, will soon be divided by earth prisms into three sections.

The Section between Fort William and Winnipeg, 423 miles, which was built by the Government, is now generally in first-class condition, but a large number of the timber trestle bridges and several of the wooden truss bridges have required renewal during the year. They were inferior structures in the first place, and those renewed had nearly reached the usual life of such timber work. Where it could be done without materially increasing the outlay, earth embankments have been substituted for timber trestles. The wooden truss bridges are being renewed in wood, because of the present high price of iron-work and the crowded condition of all the bridge works, and because iron structures would require masonry piers and abutments, which would excessively