

of the value of the work. The lowest offers having in nearly all cases been accepted, several of the Contractors (as they allege) have lost money, and have preferred claims for extras and damages. I have felt it my duty to resist these claims, so far as they were not based, in my opinion, upon just grounds, having relation to the contract; and it has afforded me satisfaction, that in taking this stand, amidst the storm of obloquy to which I was exposed, I have been supported by the Commissioners and Government.

It is the rule, and not the exception, that there will be large claims for extra allowances on Railway Works, as they are let upon this Continent; for even where surveys are made in the most elaborate manner, unforeseen contingencies will always arise. I have no reason to believe that upon this Railway, they have been greater than usual.

All the claims that, in my view, had an equitable basis have been allowed and settled.

It may not be improper to state, that one of the causes of the difference between my original estimate and the probable cost of the Railway, was the incompleteness of the surveys, caused by the great difficulty in procuring an efficient staff at that time, as already stated in the Report of 1858, pages 37 and 38; and in the Supplementary Report, page 30 to 32.

Every country has its own peculiar difficulties in the way of Railway construction: no one can build in New Brunswick, or elsewhere, without adding to his former experience. The sudden alternations of climate from frost to thaws and heavy rains, is one of the peculiarities of the portion of this country through which the Railway is located.

I would not now think of putting a Road under "bulk sum" contract, or making an estimate of the quantities of work to be done, or the probable cost, until a sufficient portion of the summer season, with a full staff of competent Surveyors, had been occupied in perfecting the location, and a winter and spring devoted to observing the fall of rain and effect of freshets.

It would require all the information derived from these sources, to enable an Engineer to determine the requisite height of embankments, width of cuttings, and necessary quantities of culvert and bridge masonry, so as to render but few changes of plans necessary; and I would here state that no "bulk sum" contracts can be carried out satisfactorily, unless based on an accurate survey, and in full knowledge of all the work to be done.