

Honorable H.  
H. Killaly.  
17th May, 1862

I thought the work could not be done for the prices named. The extra work is three times the quantity of the contract work. I only saw the plans once before the building. I said to His Excellency, before the buildings were begun, that they could not be completed for three times the sum named in the appropriation. I included in my estimate, the Governor's residence. His Excellency took a minute of my remark. This was before the contract was signed. I did not think it my duty to make my opinion known to the Department; my immediate duties in connection with the Department did not render it necessary that I should do so.

[To Hon. Mr. Dessaulles.]

I do not know who made the schedule of prices. Referring to page 43 of the blue book, I understand the schedule as to excavations in rock only to apply to the base of the building, according to levels shewn in plans, which were irregular. Pits should have been sunk before the plans were made; there would have been no difficulty in ascertaining in this way, the precise character of the excavations. The reasons why it was not done, were that any one would, in seeing the ground, have assumed that a solid foundation could readily have been got. The other reason was, the pressure and clamor upon the Government to begin the buildings, and consequent lack of time. This clamor did exist, I think, generally. It was not, I think, confined to Ottawa or its vicinity. I think, seeing clay there (on the site), pits should have been sunk. I would have sunk them before beginning. The pits might not have assisted materially. My pits would not have been sunk in the rock, but in the clay. The chief difficulties arose under the rock surface, where I would not have sunk pits, nor any one else, however prudent, I think. It turned out that where the surface appeared earth, some few feet under solid rock appeared 7 or 8 feet in thickness. The Contractors are to find out this. All progress works have been suspended since October 1861, under arrangements made by me. Had the system of ventilation and heating been adopted before the contracts were entered into, the expense would have been materially curtailed. No system of heating or of ventilation had been adopted before the buildings began. All this should have been done beforehand. It was not done I presume on account of the pressure upon the Government. Had it been done, a great saving would have been effected. Tenders would have been put in at insufficient prices, however, and the result would have been the stoppage of the works, and their being thrown upon the Government incomplete. I say this to explain that I do not think that the expenses would have been so materially curtailed as might at first sight be thought, but not to justify the omission to adopt a system of ventilation and heating beforehand. I gave much consideration to the question of supervision. I found competent overseers and clerks of works. The defect in the supervision was that Garth, to fulfil his contract, assumed control over the work, and much interference with the supervision arose in consequence. I will answer this question at length hereafter. The first interference in the price had taken place before I went there. The progress prices had been put down at higher rates than those in the schedules. I adopted these prices in some instances; in others I added to them. I considered the reports at pages 286 and 303, before allowing extra prices. The architects looked upon their