

contract. I presume it was advertised in the same way as the Lefebvre bridge, by putting up notice in the chief commissioner's office.

A DISCOVERY THAT COST MONEY.

The superstructure of the Mill Cove bridge is mentioned above. But there-by hangs another tale. This bridge was put up to tender. The lowest offer for the whole structure was \$6,600. The plan then was to clear away the old cribs and put in a long steel trestle. The contract was, however, divided into two and let at \$6,737, an advance of \$137 above the lowest tender. But before the work began the government discovered that the cribs were filled with stone and could be used again. Here was a chance to save money. So the contracts were cancelled and new ones made to utilize the foundation. The result of this piece of economy may be learned from the public accounts. The bridge when completed cost the province \$7,630.76. The happy discovery of material seems to have cost the province \$952.

ANOTHER SAMPLE.

A contract for superstructure was let in Northumberland county. The favorite tenderer was so fortunate as to bid lower than the competitors. But he was not allowed to suffer. If he bid low, he also built low. The piers are said to be several feet lower than the contract required. Other contractors, bid for the work as specified. They could not compete with a man who built as he liked.

THE HOLLOW NOT FILLED.

In Queens county tenders were asked for a wooden bridge and approaches. The specifications were exact as to the length and height of the embankment from the end of the bridge to a neighboring hill. The embankment was thought to represent about half the cost of the work. The figures of the favorite were so low that the other tenderers were surprised. They were not surprised when they saw how the work was done. The hollow was not filled at all, but the road dropped down to the old level and then climbed the hill again. If the local men had been allowed to tender on the job as it was done they would have made much lower offers than the one accepted. These are a few of many instances.

THEN THE EXTRAS.

Then Mr. Emmerson's contractors

come in strong on extras. Here are some. The following table gives contract prices and the sums actually paid in the case of a number of bridges. Particulars in each case can be furnished if necessary:

Contract price.	Amount paid.
\$1,995	\$2,456
1,130	1,447
1,375	1,563
420	587
1,450	2,293
2,500	4,440
759	908
1,490	1,981
475	533
250	312
449	672
770	822
1,465	2,633

It would thus appear that the two and three price system which is the rule in steel bridges is applied as far as possible in substructure and in small bridge contracts. When it is considered that the department of public works is expending from \$250,000 to \$300,000 a year it will be seen that though the present system may be good for contractors it is bad for the taxpayers.

NOVA SCOTIA BRIDGES.

They Are Good for One Hundred Years or More if Looked After.

HALIFAX, January 28.—Your correspondent saw Premier Murray, Chief Commissioner Church and Provincial Engineer Murphy in respect to Mr. Emmerson's statements disparaging the Nova Scotia bridges. Premier Murray said: "You can well understand why I do not wish to say anything just now on the bridges of Nova Scotia, nor do I propose to do so. When the question is made an issue in this province we will discuss it fully."

Mr. Church said practically the same thing though less forcibly.

Provincial Engineer Murphy laughed ironically when I referred to Mr. Emmerson's statement about the short life of Nova Scotia iron bridges. "I don't care to say anything about New Brunswick bridges, nor to compare them with ours, but you may quote me as saying that Nova Scotia's bridges are good for one hundred years and more if looked after. Our wooden bridges will live twenty-five years. I don't know personally much