

openings made in it. When the river is at its high stages, the volume that passes down the 'Sny' is, of course, proportionately greater. In January, 1888, during an ice jam, large quantities of ice passed down the north branch, and destroyed in a great measure the mills and dam at Moulinette. If there had been a dam at that time at the north-west point of the island, it is fully believed that no one can say with any degree of certainty what would result, nor indeed what would be the effect at any time of closing the north branch of the river. The St. Lawrence is on too grand a scale to admit of the probable result of interference with it to be even approximated by the use of formulæ fairly applicable to ordinary streams. It is a well-known fact that the river has been seriously affected by causes either little understood or altogether ignored by those desirous of accomplishing certain objects, apparently irrespective of ulterior results."

This criticism of the chief engineer upon the report of Mr. Keefer is certainly a most unfair one. He gives his Minister to understand that a large volume of water passed through the Chenailles, and that, if a dam were constructed, as was proposed, at the head of Sheik's Island, a serious result would ensue. If such a dam of the proportions mentioned had been constructed in 1888, at the head of Sheik's Island, not a drop of water could have passed through the Chenailles channel. The reference he makes to the gentleman whose report he is criticising, is unworthy of a professional man. The Chief Engineer of Canals might very properly say that the plans recommended by Mr. Samuel Keefer would not accomplish the ends desired, but there was nothing to warrant him in speaking of Mr. Samuel Keefer in this way, and to say that the causes affecting the river were "either little understood, or altogether ignored by those desirous of accomplishing certain objects, apparently irrespective of ulterior results." Such a criticism ought not to come from the Chief Engineer of Canals, but it serves to prove, as I said in the first part of my remarks, that the professional jealousy which served to make this an unsafe canal fifty years ago is to-day attempting to bring about the same result. He says:

"The effect of cutting loose a sheet of ice in a bay, then swinging it across the channel, has been known to lead to the drowning out for a time of a considerable tract of land along the margin of the river, and the closing of a branch of the river at the head of the Beauharnois Canal is well known to have led to a vast deal of trouble and an outlay for land damages of nearly \$400,000."

There is no parallel whatever between the two cases—the closing of a branch of a river at Beauharnois, where there was a swift current, the length 600 or 800 feet and the depth 18 feet, and the closing of what he chooses to call the river, but which is not the river, only a little Chenailles, at the head of Sheik's Island where there is never more than two feet of water. In the latter case it is not possible that