

Now, the plan that Mr. Keefer proposed to the Government in that letter in the month of October last, is the same plan which I brought before the Government about ten years ago. I laid the matter personally before the present Prime Minister and Sir Charles Tupper, who was then Minister of Railways and Canals, and he ordered a survey to be made; but, although that survey was made, and an estimate was made of the cost, just about the time Sir Charles Tupper resigned his position as chief of that department, no report was made by the chief engineer to the Government, so as to enable them to act intelligently upon it. He contented himself with verbally saying to Sir Charles Tupper's successor, that the plan was a ridiculous one, and would not give a greater head of water. We did not ask for it in order to get a greater head of water, but because it would enable a larger volume of water to be brought into the canal for the purposes of manufacture and navigation. If that plan had been acted upon, it does not require that a man should be a sage to be able to inform this House that no such accident as that which happened the other day, could possibly have happened to the canal. I shall deal now with Mr. Page's objection to the plan proposed of an inland canal from the head of the canal to Mille Roches. In his report dated the 27th of February last, he says:

"When the work of enlarging and deepening it was placed under contract, provision was made that the widening might be done on either side that would be most likely to improve the line, that is to say, that although the widening was intended to be done principally on the north side of the present channel, it was thought that some salient or prominent points could, with advantage to the general line, be in part removed. The material excavated in widening and deepening the prism, was, of course, to be placed on the south or river side of those places where the banks of the canal are close to the margin of the river."

Here the Chief Engineer of Canals admits that he proposed tampering with the north side of the bank of the canal, to remove portions of it, and throw it over to the south side with a view of deepening the canal, yet, in the next paragraph he is obliged to admit that it would not be safe or prudent for him to do it, but that he must take the north side of the canal on the shore line. Speaking of the break, he says:

"The casualty above mentioned, and the information subsequently obtained, have, however, shown that it would be injudicious to cut into the north or canal side of the south or river bank, consequently the widening must be done wholly on the north or landward side, and the line of the south bank allowed to remain undisturbed, and the slope on the canal side continued down to the new bottom line at the same angle as at present."