

This being the case the conclusion now arrived at by the contractors is not more to be wondered at than the collapse of the dams they unfortunately, for all parties, attempted to form.

It appears to me that the only certain way of getting the Aqueduct built now, is to place the works in the hands of experienced energetic contractors at rates that will enable them to form proper dams and otherwise conduct the undertaking advantageously and in the manner contemplated.

I therefore advise that the offer of Messrs. Hunter, Murray & Cleveland, to relinquish their contract, be accepted.

The Government is, doubtless, best able to determine the manner or basis on which this should be done, but whatever the decision in that respect may be, it is desirable that it should be arrived at as early as possible. This is important as it will no doubt require considerable time to arrange matters with the outgoing contractors as well as to put things in shape to enable the work to be re-let. For, although no alterations whatever are required in any part, or in any of the features of the original design, still a pretty good idea must be given, not only of what remains to be done, but of what has been done, before the work can be intelligently taken hold of by a new contractor.

It may further be stated that, before a new coffer-dam can be built, the wreck of the greater part of the old one must be removed, and that all the materials provided for the works must be remeasured, which, owing to the position of the stone and mode adopted of piling them, will be a tedious and expensive undertaking. These facts, it will be seen, point to the desirability of immediate action in the matter with a view to instructions being given to the person the Department may see proper to intrust with the duty of arranging for the works that have been done, as well as to take such steps as may be necessary for reletting those that are required for the completion of the undertaking.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN PAGE, Chief Engineer Canals.

The Secretary of Railways and Canals.

OTTAWA, October 22nd, 1880.

Sir,—With reference to the report made by you this day upon the application of Messrs. Hunter, Murray & Cleveland, to be relieved of their contract for section No. 27 of the Welland Canal, I am directed to request you to state the measures, the adoption of which would in your judgment, promptly, economically, and efficiently secure the completion of the works embraced in this contract.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

F. BRAUN, Secretary.

JOHN PAGE, Esq., Chief Engineer of Govt. Canals.

OTTAWA, 23rd October, 1880.

Sir,—Your letter No. 54,567 has been received requesting an opinion as to the best course to adopt to secure the prompt, economical and efficient completion of the Aqueduct over the Chippewa River at the Town of Welland.

It may be stated at the outset that the case in point shows that none of the objects now aimed at have been effected by awarding the works to the lowest tender; although at the time, the prospects appeared favorable for accomplishing all these objects.

To give an unexceptionable reply to your enquiry seems to me barely possible, as the result of any course recommended depends greatly upon actions beyond one's control; nevertheless it is believed that by drawing attention, first, to what in many cases has been found not to effect the contemplated objects, may in some measure clear the way and assist in arriving at a solution of the question.

It is well known that, when tenders are invited for the execution of public works of any kind, offers are made frequently by persons whose only object seems to be to