

It ought not to be expected of an Engineer, that he should be so absorbed, by devotion to any sectional interest, as to be insensible of the value of other interests, and the power by which they are likely to be advanced. Such an absorption would subject him to errors equally disreputable to him, and injurious to his employers. Exempt himself from the bias of special pecuniary interest, in the result, the elevation of his views, and the comprehension of his knowledge, guided by long experience and habitual meditation, upon such subjects, ought to enable him to judge more safely than others, for the interest of the Stockholders. He should certainly be cautious of giving hasty and inconsiderate opinions; but when properly called upon to express his views, should be prepared to present facts and plans collected and matured, with all the industry and ability of which he is master, and combined under a deep sense of all the objects of his trust. In his recommendations, all the capitalists, who make investments in the work, to which they refer, are interested to hold him, and they should hold him, to no slight accountability.

The object of your company is great, in all its bearings, and I am satisfied, is entirely feasible, and you expect much from a professional report upon it. This expectation is natural and reasonable; but it cannot be met without fearful responsibility, on the part of your Engineer. A preliminary survey, carried on with rapidity and under disadvantageous circumstances, through a country presenting a wide extent of wilderness compared with settled portions, to elucidate a vast plan of improvement, in which every settlement already formed feels a lively concern, and every new-comer finds the principal motive to determine his individual residence, involves in every step of the progress, much care and anxiety, and these are rendered still more grave, when the survey is looked to, for eliciting facts, and suggesting plans, which shall lead to large investments of money for stock, already in part subscribed for, and for opening such expansive means and facilities of internal communication, as will strikingly advance private interest, and the general prosperity. Under such cir-