

There is a stoppage on the work to-day, caused as already stated by the water coming over the top of the puddle and streaming through the dam in every direction when the river was three feet ten inches below freshet level.

Do the contractors, I would ask, "disclaim any responsibility therefor," or is it "attributable to the engineer in charge."

I do not hesitate to say that unless more comprehensive measures are taken by the contractors than have been inaugurated since the letter to which this letter is a reply was written, the difficulties in connection with the Aqueduct coffer-dam will increase rather than diminish, and the date for the completion of the work be indefinitely prolonged.

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

W. G. THOMPSON.

JOHN PAGE, Esq., Chief Engineer, Canada,
Department of Railways and Canals, Ottawa.

OTTAWA, 13th May, 1880.

SIR,—With reference to your letter of the 12th ultimo, in which you submit for the consideration of this Department a certain proposition for the construction of the dams necessary for the prosecution of the works under your contract for section No. 37 of the Welland Canal, I am directed to say that the matter has been duly considered, and that your proposal cannot be entertained.

I have now to request you to submit a practical scheme for the immediate resumption of the work now in abeyance, in a manner agreeable to the tenor of your contract. Failing the submission of such a scheme on or before the first day of June next, the Department will adopt such a course as circumstances may warrant.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

F. BRAUN, Secretary.

MESSRS. HUNTER, MURRAY & CLEVELAND, Contractors.

ST. CATHERINES, May 31st, 1880.

SIR,—In accordance with the requisition in your letter of the 13th inst., we beg to submit the following in order to meet the unforeseen difficulties which have arisen in the attempt to carry out the contract plans and specifications for the Welland River Aqueduct.

We feel justified in asserting that the difficulties which have arisen have been unforeseen because the conditions of the new structure require a greater width of excavation in the bed of the river than that in which experience was had in the construction of the present Aqueduct, and because the mode of construction is different.

The location has compelled the placing of the coffer-dams so close to the proposed structure as to destroy their stability, by the moving in of the ground on which they stood after the counterpoise afforded by the river water and bed on had been removed.

That the true nature of this foundation was not suspected by the Government Engineer is evident from the fact that we were compelled to suspend our works to replace the water within our coffer-dams to prevent a great disaster to the canal bank by order of the Engineer before we had commenced work near the said banks, and when after the connecting wall was built to secure the most exposed section of the canal bank, and we were allowed to remove the water, the canal bank west of said wall began moving as stated by Mr. Thompson in his report.

We are also warranted in assuming that a firm bottom was counted upon from the fact that crib-work is proposed in the specification for the inside line of the coffer-dams.