

this summer: the fencing is completed, and the drainage throughout is as perfect as it can be made; the frequently repeated, very heavy falls of rain within the last two months amply testify to the sufficiency of these measures. The express trains commenced running on 17th July, and the regularity with which the journey is performed is the best criterion of the excellence of the road—the distance of 168 miles being run in five hours—no pains have been spared by the Contractors to finish this section as perfect as it could be made; and its condition now is such as to leave nothing to desire; but before giving them their final discharge I would suggest that the Provincial Government be required to direct its thorough inspection both in respect of its works and equipment: such a course would be satisfactory to the Contractors, and, I believe, to all others interested.

#### QUEBEC AND TROIS PISTOLES.

The works upon this section to St. Thomas (40 miles) are generally as forward, as any of those already referred to. The iron work of the Etchemin Bridge, consisting of six spans of 100 feet each, will be the last to complete; owing to the loss of the ship in which it was sent early in the spring—this had, in consequence, to be replaced, and we are in daily expectation of its arrival—the last shipment having left England five weeks ago.

The opening of this Section will entirely depend upon the completion of the Etchemin Bridge, and if nothing more unforeseen happen, it will progress without interruption.

#### MONTREAL AND PORTLAND.

The only work remaining to finish upon this Section is confined to the station at Portland, and the relaying of about twelve miles of way in that neighbourhood, all of which will be accomplished as speedily as practicable. The new Passenger Station is completed, and appears to answer its purpose well; the offices hitherto occupied in various parts of the town are now amply accommodated at the Station, sundry rents and other expenses thereby cease. This building 444 feet in length, nearly 100 feet in width, with the side occupied by the offices, divided into two stories, has been finished by the Company under the management of Mr. Beal, for twenty eight thousand pounds currency, which includes all the furnishing required for the offices and waiting rooms; being fully 25 per cent below the amount of the lowest tender received for its construction a year ago, fully justifying the resolution then adopted, not to accept any of the offers made.

The Engine House and Shops at Gorham, which were accidentally burnt last January, are being rebuilt. This will involve an expenditure of nearly £4000 currency. Some of the Locomotives standing at the time of the fire in this building were much injured; hence, the unfavorable state of our repairing accounts as compared with former periods. In this District we had also to incur the cost of restoring a River Bridge destroyed by the Spring floods for want of sufficient space for the water flow; we enlarged it to double its former dimensions, and laid the rails upon wrought iron beams similar to those in use on other portions of the Grand Trunk Railway. We had also to make additional openings in other embankments for similar objects, which the extraordinary floods of last spring pointed out to be necessary; in some instances the embankments were washed away, and the necessity for these precautions became imperative.

The Berlin Falls branch has been graded, the permanent way is being laid, and will very shortly be completed.

The traffic this season has not reached an amount, by any means, satisfactory; and when we look into the causes, we find that the Lumber trade has greatly fallen off; and to the general depression in this branch of traffic, this is mainly attributable; we hope however its duration will be limited, and that in due time we shall feel the effects of a change for the better. Another considerable item of Revenue has completely failed us this year, viz:—the entire absence of all Ocean Steam communication with Portland; this is a subject of the last importance to the Grand Trunk Railway, and one which will always claim the earnest solicitation of those interested in its prosperity.

I have the honor to be, Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

ALEX. M. ROSS,  
*Engineer.*

Montreal, September, 1855.