

figures correctly, a cash deposit of \$1,200,000. It was a very large deposit, and the contractors so expressed themselves; but the undertaking was so gigantic that the department and the government thought it advisable to ask for a very large deposit. As against that the contractors of course, get drawbacks on their contracts as they proceed with the work. Mr. Vautelet resigned his position on February 22. An order in council was passed on February 27, accepting his resignation as from February 22. The contract was signed on April 4, 1911. Mr. Charles N. Monsarratt, M.C., S.C.E., formerly chief bridge engineer of the Canadian Pacific railway, was appointed to succeed Mr. Vautelet, on May 6, 1911. Mr. Macdonald, according to the terms of his appointment, retired as soon as the contract was signed, and was succeeded by Mr. C. C. Schneider, C.E., of New York, who was appointed on May 15, 1911.

Mr. FOSTER (North Toronto). Did Mr. Vautelet, who resigned shortly after the final report of the four out of the five engineers was made, make any comments or any report, or express any opinion as to what was advised by the others?

Mr. GRAHAM. I think he did not make any further comment.

Now, the reason I have brought this matter to the attention of the House is that this was the largest undertaking of its kind ever conceived, it was surrounded with a great many difficulties, and the government were of the opinion, which seemed to be acquiesced in by this House on several occasions, that the safe way to carry on this work was to select a board of competent men, the best they could find, and place all the responsibility, because it was entirely of a technical character, in their hands. I may say that not so much as one stenographer was recommended by the government for that board. They selected their own staff from the messengers up, and recommended what their salaries should be, and no increase of salary which the board recommended was ever refused by the government; so there would be no excuse for the board saying that they had ever been interfered with. The board having accepted the responsibility of carrying on this great work, the government relied solely on them. Whether rightly or wrongly, every step taken from start to finish in connection with this work was taken on the responsibility of the board. I think no errors were committed, but if they were, the responsibility would rest on the technical men who accepted the responsibility. I think that they made no mistake, and that none will occur, and that they will carry the work to a success.

Mr. CURRIE. In the consideration of the plans for this bridge, did the ques-

Mr. GRAHAM.

tion arise whether it should be of the cantilever type or of the suspension type? In New York, where they have great bridges, we find that they are of the suspension type.

Mr. GRAHAM. In New York there is no bridge that approaches this one. But that question was thoroughly threshed out and the board was unanimous for the cantilever principle. The government having decided to place the responsibility on the board, that responsibility was kept on the board all the time, and from beginning to end, in our connection with that great enterprise, no step was taken except on the advice, not only of a majority of the board, when the entire board did not agree, but on the advice of an enlarged board, and the final conclusion was upon the advice of four men to one.

I make this statement for the purpose of placing it on record, not merely for the benefit of the House, the members being fairly conversant with it, but for the benefit of the public, the financial men of England, and the contractors on this continent, and in Europe. The Canadian government, no matter what party is in power, I take it, endeavours to do its business with fairness to everybody, always keeping in mind that they are serving the Canadian people from first to last; and that was done with regard to this great work. In conclusion, I may say that I am not sorry, and have no apologies to offer, for being able, in following the advice of this board, so selected, to give this gigantic work to a Canadian firm, so that as far as possible, the money spent on it will be spent among the workmen of the Dominion of Canada.

Mr. FOSTER (North Toronto). Mr. Speaker, I do not propose to follow the hon. gentleman in any critique of his long statement upon a very complex and technical subject. I am not prepared to do that, either from a late reading of the circumstances outside or from a knowledge of the more technical and abstruse work of the contract itself and all that it involves in the plans and specifications. I think the hon. gentleman has done well in making the statement as full as he has, and entirely free from partisan bias. There are, however, two or three things that occur to my mind as a layman, and I will take the liberty of expressing them. In the first place, it would seem as though the board of engineers, after having approved of a design, and after having settled upon it as the official design, gave an option to the tenderers to tender either upon that or upon a design of their own; and, as it turned out, the St. Lawrence Company did not tender upon the official design.