

Q. Economy in construction?—Yes.

Q. And that was authorized by Mr. Smith?—Yes. It is clearly demonstrated that it is direct economy in construction.

*By the Honorable Mr. Macpherson:—*

Q. Then the Committee understand you to say that if the Government determined on going on now under the original plan, not more than one-fourth or one-third of the trestle-work originally specified would be constructed?—I think it would be something like that.

Q. The rest of the work having being filled in with solid banks?—Yes.

*By the Honorable Mr. Penny:—*

Q. But the reduction in that portion of the trestle-work which is upon the land is in consequence of the reduction of the trestle-work upon the water?—The reduction of the trestle on the land is due to the economy produced in substituting embankments for trestle-work on the water-stretches.

*By the Honorable Mr. Macpherson:—*

Q. Is it not partially due to increase of rock-work beyond what was originally estimated?—It may be, because if there is more rock-work, and two cubic yards of rock make three cubic yards of bank, the more rock you have, the more trestle-work it will do away with out of proportion to the rock cutting there is.

Q. What do you now estimate the quantity of solid rock-work at?—It is less than we estimated it in my statement of last year. The original estimate of solid rock was 300,000 yards; last year we made it in round numbers 525,000 yards; and now we estimate it will only be 516,000 yards. That is an increase of 216,000 yards over the original estimate.

Q. Did not that increased quantity of rock go to form embankments?—Certainly.

Q. And to that extent it diminishes the trestle-work?—Certainly; I think so.

*By the Honorable Mr. Haythorne:—*

Q. And the increase in the quantity of rock arose partially from lowering the grade?—It is due partially to lowering the grade and partially to incomplete information when we made the first estimate and the plans. What is left after accounting for the discrepancy between the two amounts, is due to a modification of the grades. I think I was asked yesterday,—“Did you furnish the contractors with bills of timber for the trestle-work?” and I said “No.” I was then asked: “Did they ever ask you for them?” and I said “No.” I wish to qualify that in this way: they never have asked me for bills of timber, but I find out upon inquiry that they have asked my Assistant Engineer, Mr. Carre, for bills of timber for the trestle-work, and, I think, at an early stage of the proceedings. We were not willing to give them because we could not tell what trestle-work would be required until the rock banks were done; and we might be committed to giving them bills for timber for trestle-work that we would never require. We have another and stronger ground which is: I do not think we are bound to give them bills at all. We furnish them with the drawings and plans, but we are not obliged to furnish them with bills, as they must arrive at the quantities themselves; and if we do it for them it is only an act of courtesy. I wish to correct what I said that I had never been asked for bills; they asked my assistant, Mr. Carre, in writing, but he did not give them any for the reasons I have stated. Since I was before the Committee yesterday I was looking amongst my papers for information for the Committee of the other House and I came across another letter referring to the substitution of earth and rock for trestle-work over the water-stretches, which I now beg to lay before the Committee.

(Copy.)

WINNIPEG, 18th September, 1878.

SIR,—You are aware that the Engineer-in-Chief recommended that the water-stretches on Contract 15 should be filled in with a base of rock taken from the cuttings, to be carried up to a level of three feet over high water mark, and of sufficient width to carry on earth embankment between that level and grade; the latter to be