

drivers started off with its human load. Ere the middle of the river was gained there was a deafening cracking and groaning on all sides. Before those on the sleigh realised the import of the sound the whole mass of ice commenced to move bodily down stream. An immersion seemed imminent, but the driver, alert and vigilant,

The significance of this interruption was appreciated by the railway from the very first, but how to span the gap was a baffling obstacle. A bridge was certain to be costly and difficult, seeing that at this point the waterway is over a mile in width, deep, and runs swiftly, while the pressure of the vast ice-shoves in the spring is enormous.



THE VICTORIA JUBILEE BRIDGE, MONTREAL, SHOWING THE NEW SUPERSTRUCTURE.

It was built around the tubular bridge, so that traffic was not stopped. The present bridge carries a double track, electric tramway, roads, and pavements.

steered his team dexterously, and at last, when the movement subsided, drove frantically towards the bank, reaching it safely. But the experience proved too terrifying to one of the passengers, who died from exhaustion and fright. It may be mentioned that the ice attains such a thickness on the river as to be able to support a moving train. Indeed, in the movement of freight during the winter the Grand Trunk Railway used to lay down a light track from bank to bank, and run the trains, hauled by a small locomotive, across the ice.

The greatest drawback, however, was experienced every spring and autumn. The ice-floes in the river rendered ferrying precarious, so traffic had to be abandoned for some two or three weeks until the river had cleared or had become frozen over sufficiently to enable the sleighs to venture thereon.

It was feared that no creation would be able to stand. However, Mr. Alexander Ross, an accomplished engineer, who had achieved a big reputation building railways in Europe, took up the problem. He proposed a massive bridge, built upon the tubular system, such as carries the London and North Western Railway across the Menai Straits to-day. He spent several months inspecting the river and banks, studying the fickleness of the currents and ice runs. He returned to England in 1852 and communicated his proposals to Robert Stephenson. The latter extended his approval and congratulated the engineer upon his daring and skill. When Ross's designs became known they were attacked vehemently in certain quarters, especially by American interests who aspired to complete the work, but Stephenson supported his colleague whole-heartedly, and the work was commenced.