

would propose to construct the first three, as provided for by specifications, before excavating for the fourth. Our experience of the Welland River is, that the remaining water-way would prove sufficient; moreover, the character of the ground is such that it is doubtful whether the construction of this fourth arch can be effected in one season as expected by specification—and the risk of a spring freshet, with the dams in for first two sections, may have in any case to be encountered.

Our plan for the proposed new coffer-dams having been approved of, we would be glad to have an inspector placed over the work to see to its proper execution.

Hoping that the consideration of the fact herein set forth will induce you to take a more favorable view of our proposition than is set forth in your letter of the 12th instant.

We have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servants,

HUNTER, MURRAY & CLEVELAND.

F. BRAUN, Secretary, Department of Railways and Canals, Ottawa.

OTTAWA, 26th July, 1880.

SIR,—On receiving letter No 86,620 on matters connected with the Aqueduct for carrying the Welland Canal over the Chippewa River, although it contains little else than a repetition of former incorrect assertions, a copy of it was nevertheless forwarded to Mr. Thompson, Resident Officer, for report.

The remarks of that gentleman are herewith enclosed, which, taken in connection with his report of the 5th June, appended to one from me, dated 11th June, 1880, together with previous documents, all lead to the impression that however it might please the contractors to get up a discussion on the subject, there is reason to believe that it would in reality be wasting time as well as that of the Department to gratify them in that respect at present.

I therefore advise that Messrs. Hunter, Murray and Cleveland be informed that the Department sees no reason to alter in any way the letter addressed to them on 12th June last, nor to interfere in any way with the conditions of the contract entered into for the construction of the Aqueduct.

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

J. PAGE, Chief Engineer.

Documents Nos. 86,776, 86,927, 86,937, 87,530 and 87,801 inclosed.

J. PAGE.

The Secretary of Railways and Canals.

WELLAND, 23rd July, 1880.

SIR,—I received, this afternoon, a copy of the letter of the contractors for section 27, Welland Canal, dated 19th July, 1880, on the subject of the Aqueduct coffer-dams.

As directed, I proceeded to report on the letter referred to, which appears in a great measure to be a repetition of a former letter of theirs on the same subject, dated 31st May, 1880, on which I reported under date of 5th June, 1880.

The contractors say, on the first page of the letter, that during the attempted construction of the coffer-dam: "No protests or complaints of any kind were addressed to us, either verbally or in writing, as to the insufficiency of length or strength of pile, or quality or quantity of puddle, and that the direction of the Chief Engineer to drive clusters of piles inside of foundation, and place oblique braces from same to north coffer-dam before unwatering foundation, was faithfully carried out."

The first portion of the above statement was made in the contractors' letter of 31st May, 1880, and replied to in my letter of 5th June, 1880.

The last portion of the statement, which refers to the Chief Engineer's direction as to clusters of piles being "faithfully carried out," is incorrect, inasmuch as I was