

Q. Did you send a copy of this to Mr. Smith?—In my subsequent letter to him I made extracts from it. Then on the same day I wrote a further letter to Mr. Carre to this effect:—

WINNIPEG, 3rd November,

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Whitehead is anxious to submit a proposition to the Government, whereby he will be permitted to make up all the embankments on Contract 15 with earth or sand filling in lieu trestle-work.

He, together with his engineer (Mr. Ruttan), had a short interview with Mr. Smith on the subject yesterday, just as he was leaving. Mr. Smith seemed to favor the proposal, but before submitting it to the Government requires some more detailed information on the subject—made up under the following heads, giving the quantities and cost as near as possible:—

1st. The cost of completing the line according to the present design.

2nd. The cost of same substituting earth or sand filling instead of trestle-work.

3rd. Cost of completing line as at present contemplated and subsequent filling in of trestle portion, with earth or sand.

Note.—All items, such as masonry, bridging and stream tunnels, &c., &c., which would be common to all three plans, may be disregarded in the calculations, or better still, given in a bulk sum common to all three.

The estimate under the first head should show the quantity and cost of rock in line cuttings, and such clay or sand as is contained in the same, together with sand and clay which can be easily obtained by borrowing, and the quantity and cost of the trestle-work required to fill up the ungraded portion remaining after this is done; the line, as regards grading, being considered completed under the present contract when this is done.

The estimate under the second head will show the cost with the trestle-work done away, and earth or sand substituted. It being distinctly understood that if this plan is adopted the contractor will make no charge for extra haul, no matter what distance he may have to carry the material to make up his banks, nor for putting in a narrow rock bank on each side of the sand fillings across water-stretches. If trestle-work must be retained at some points, you will bear in mind that it will prove most economic in high banks at points other than water-stretches.

The estimate under the third head explains itself. I have not yet the necessary data, in the shape of longitudinal section, cross-sections, &c., furnished me by you, to enable me to have the estimates made here; you will therefore have to prepare and forward them to me, as it is very important that I should have this information at the earliest practicable date. Mr. Ruttan, who takes this out, has kindly, at Mr. Smith's suggestion, undertaken to render you all the assistance in his power to make them up, and you can keep Mr. Rodger, who accompanies him, to assist you, and after that he will rejoin Mr. McNab.

Mr. Smith has authorized me to permit the contractors to put in the double rock banks across the water-stretches to be filled in between with sand, top to grade with sand, when such a course is practicable and desirable. Where there is enough rock at hand for a full rock bank over water-stretches this course can be followed.

Mr. Smith has consented to the grade being lowered somewhat between stations 1,230 and 1,330—say something like three feet, or thereabout, at the summit at station 1,280—if you think the same can be done with advantage.

Mr. Ruttan reports that there will only be rock enough in the cuts at the west end of the contract to make one of the rock sides to the embankment across "Cross Lake." Mr. Smith has authorized the lowering of the grade through them and over Cross Lake, to such an extent as will permit sufficient rock from the cuts to make up the rock bank on the other side.

There must be a clear understanding with the contractors as to the fact that if consent is given as to earth filling in lieu of trestle-work, all the banks must be so