

"from Lake Superior to Manitoba." So much for the uselessness of this lock, under any circumstances ; but the manner in which it has been carried out shows a spirit of recklessness that one can hardly understand. When the Government cancelled the contract for the railway from Fort William to Lake Shebandowan, in order to change the location to that by Fort Savanne, the amount expended on this lock did not exceed \$73,940. The department at that time evidently took the common-sense view, that as the line of the railway had been changed, and the canal rendered absolutely useless, the work upon it should be stopped ; and, in November, 1875, a telegram was sent to the superintendent of the lock to the following effect :—"Close all canal works at Fort Frances ; suspend all proceedings." It is evident that these works had proved too valuable an asylum for broken down political hacks looking for situations, to be thus permanently abandoned ; and in April, 1876, the department instructed the superintendent to resume work upon the lock by day labour. The work has gone on ever since, and according to the evidence of Mr. Sutherland, \$210,389 was expended up to the 30th June last, and he assumes that the work before it is completed will cost \$250,000. **TO SHOW THE ABSURDITY OF THIS LOCK AS PART OF THE PACIFIC RAILWAY, IT IS ONLY NECESSARY TO SAY THAT IT IS A HUNDRED MILES FROM THE NEAREST POINT OF THE CANADIAN PACIFIC ;** and according to Mr. Mortimer, one of the engineers examined by the committee, the cost of making even a possible connection between Lake Shebandowan and the Lake of the Woods, outside of this Fort Frances lock, will be \$341,000. The Committee, in their report as to the value of these locks, used the following language : "Your Committee has failed to discover that the Fort Frances lock can be of use to the Dominion. The evidence shows that it will be of no appreciable advantage even to the locality in which it is situated. The trade of the fertile Canadian bank of Rainy River, and of the whole country west of the lock, will seek the railway at Rat Portage, and little or no portion of it will ascend through the lock and go eastwards, as, at the east end of Rainy Lake, it will be confronted with nine portages, and the ascent of 40 feet which separate Fort Savanne from Rainy Lake. The country on the Canadian shore of Rainy Lake is unsuitable for agriculture ; a moderate trade in timber and saw logs is all that can be expected to flow from that region. For the accommodation of such a trade, when it springs up, a lock at Fort Frances will not be required, an inexpensive slide would answer every purpose, and even that would not have been needed for years. It has been suggested that the lock might be of service as a military work, but evidence was not taken on that point, as in the opinion of your Committee, while the lock will be unused for commerce, it cannot be seriously contended that an isolated lock on the frontier of Minnesota may become a serviceable military work of this Dominion."

That conclusion is fully borne out by the evidence of engineers and others examined by the Committee. We have thus \$250,000 spent in a work of absolutely no value to the country, undertaken in violation of law or without the authority of Parliament, and designed simply for the purpose of offering employment to people who are clamoring to be rewarded for services rendered to their party.