

THE TUNNEL

tion could be implected, in the most satisfactory manner, and at reasonable cost, and sent a strong delegation to Ottawa to lay their plaint and its remedy before the Privy Council. Impossibility could not be pleaded until everything had been tried. There was one way at least which promised complete physical connection and all the advantages from it flowing,—the construction of a tunnel under the straits. The distance between New Brunswick and P. E. Island at the nearest points—Money Point, in the former, and Carleton Head, in the latter, is only six and a half miles. This tunnel project was not infrequently talked of, agitated for, and again permitted to go in to abeyance. The late Ser. x, afterwards Governor Howlan, had put it prominently before Parliament and the people from 1884 to 1894, when he took office. The great leaders had spoken guardedly about it, as was to be expected, but hopefully, if declared practicable. Most people thought it would cost a greater sum than could be reasonably exacted. Tunnelling was then in its infancy. It is now as common as the streets.

Sir John Macdonald, Sir Charles Tupper, Sir John Thompson, from the Conservative side, at various times and places held out hope of ultimate relief through a Tunnel. Sir Wilfrid Laurier in 1892, when plain Wilfrid Laurier and leader of the Opposition, crossed to the Island, by way of the Capes, and suffered sufficiently to put him into complete sympathy with us. On his return, he wrote from Athabaska to the editor of one of our papers, who espoused the Tunnel cause, as follows:—

"I hardly would have thought an expression of opinion as to the construction of a Tunnel to connect the Island of Prince Edward with the mainland, necessary from me. Every man who has given any attention to the condition of things and the necessities involved by the entering of the Island into Confederation, must admit that such a Tunnel must be constructed if the thing is reasonably practical. The first requisite is to have an accurate survey and reliable estimates; I am only sorry that these were not obtained long ago."

The geologists, Francis Bain, Sir William Dawson and Dr. Ellis, had made a thorough examination of the locale; they had declared it a splendid tunnel bed, offering practically no engineering difficulties. A consulting member of the great house of Fox & Fox, at the instance of Sir Douglas himself, was engaged to make a survey as a basis of report for his distinguished chief. The water soundings were made by the Admiralty Survey under Capt Maxwell and F. G. Jonah, of Ottawa. To confirm the opinion of the geologists a number of borings into the strait-bed, some 65 feet below the bottom, were ordered; and, in the summer of 1892, ten of them were made