

Now, Mr. Chairman, we find it necessary to deepen the Welland Canal to 14 feet, or 3 feet deeper than it is, intended to make the Murray Canal. Again Mr. Page says:

"It will be observed that the reasons referred to as having been urged in support of this undertaking are entirely of a commercial nature, and though evidently of considerable importance, it may be questioned whether the advantages which the work if executed would confer upon the general navigation would warrant so large an expenditure."

The expenditure referred to was \$860,000 instead of, as at present, \$1,265,000. In view of these circumstances and of the changes which have taken place in the character of the vessels which navigate the lakes, it is important that nothing should be done to lessen the comparatively small advantages which are expected from the construction of this canal. As to the question of width, this canal is constructed without locks, and it is expected to be kept open by the current of water flowing from bay to bay, and the engineers think that with a width of 80 feet this will not be sufficient to keep it clear, and if we are to keep a dredge there constantly, in order to keep that canal in working order, or at a sufficient depth for these large vessels, the expense will be all the greater. The probabilities are that at the time the early promoters of this canal were urging its construction, it would have accommodated three-fifths of the number of vessels navigating the lake. It is doubtful now if it will accommodate more than two-fifths or one-half of the class of vessels Mr. Page mentions in his report. There is no use of talking of deepening the canal unless you deepen a large portion of the Bay of Quinté. Therefore, I do not entertain any very brilliant ideas as to the future usefulness of the Murray Canal. I hold that its usefulness has, to a great extent, been destroyed by the route the Government saw fit to choose. I do not intend to protract the discussion, only in order that information may be given to the House as to the character of the report upon which the Government based their decision as to the route. We recently heard a great deal about the liberty that was taken by members of this House in criticising the acts and reports of Government engineers. I do not intend to criticise the acts and reports of the engineer who made the last survey, but I wish to point out that the representations made in the Order in Council of the 23rd of May, 1882, upon which the present route of the Murray Canal was accepted, were made entirely from the report of Mr. Rubidge. A prior survey had been made by Mr. Page, and I want to point out some of the contradictions in these reports. The Minister, in making his recommendation to Council, on the 23rd of May, 1882, says:

"That from such report it appears that of the points examined with a view to their adaptability as a port of entrance from Lake Ontario, specifically the points known as Weller's Bay and Presqu'Isle, Presqu'Isle is by far the most commodious and best harbor on the coast, having excellent anchorage and enabling a large number of vessels to lie land-locked, secure from all winds; further, that the route having this harbor as its western terminus is the one best adapted to the requirements of an extended river navigation."

Now, the words in Mr. Rubidge's report, on which, I suppose, that recommendation is founded, are these:

"And the fact of its being longer than the No. 2 route, should not be deemed a serious objection, inasmuch as the excess in distance between the bay and the open water of Lake Ontario lies through the land-locked harbor of Presqu'Isle."

Speaking of the same point, Mr. Page, the chief engineer, says:

"Were the channel through Presqu'Isle harbor made, the unavoidable difficulties to be encountered in navigating it would still present an insuperable objection to the adoption of route No. 1."

Now, we have the two engineers directly contradicting each other as to the character of Presqu'Isle harbor. Upon this same point Mr. Rubidge says:

"The larger class of propellers which run in for shelter usually anchor off Calf Pasture light. A vessel bound down the lake, and desiring to enter Presqu'Isle harbor by the new channel, must alter the course about 100°."

Mr. PLATT.

Now, let us see what Mr. Page, who, I suppose, is an engineer of equal ability, says on the same subject. He says:

"A vessel approaching Presqu'Isle must, before getting in range of the inner lights, with a view to entering the harbor, change its course fully 270 degrees, which, in certain winds, it is barely possible to do. When up with Salt Point the course must again be changed to north-westerly, so as to clear 'Calf Pasture shoal' and enter the wider portion of the harbor; in fact, the direction of the entrance, crookedness and insufficient width of the channel, are found by masters of vessels to prove serious obstacles to its being used either as a harbor of refuge or for commercial purposes."

Mr. McCALLUM. What date is that?

Mr. PLATT. Mr. Page's report was made in 1867, and Mr. Rubidge's in the fall of 1881. Of course, the answer will probably be that certain changes have taken place; the chief argument is, that the entrance to Weller's Bay is a changeable channel; but Mr. Rubidge proves that the entrance to Presqu'Isle is likewise a changeable channel.

Mr. BOWELL. No, he does not.

Mr. PLATT. Yes, he does; I will show you. The Minister represents:

"That the total length of the canal proper *via* Weller's Bay is 4 miles 680 feet, while the length *via* Presqu'Isle, is 6 miles 660 feet, or a difference in favor of Weller's Bay, in point of length, of 2 miles. This difference is not, however, held to be of weight, inasmuch as the excess by the Presqu'Isle route lies through the land-locked harbor of that place."

Now, I have here a report, as to which time cannot make any difference. Mr. Rubidge says:

"A comparison of distances from a point in the lake (*viz.*, E.S.E.,  $\frac{1}{2}$  east, half a mile from the main light), which may be taken as common to the navigation into Presqu'Isle harbor and Weller's Bay, shows that the distance from the point mentioned *via* Weller's Bay to the Bay of Quinté is 7.37 miles, whilst that *via* Presqu'Isle harbor is 9.81 miles, showing a difference of 2.44 miles (or 25 per cent.) in favor of Weller's Bay."

Now, what does Mr. Page say as to that? He says:

"A comparison of distances from a point in the lake which may be taken as common to the navigation into Presqu'Isle harbor and Weller's Bay, shows that the length from this point *via* the harbor and route No. 1 to the Bay of Quinté would be fully twice that *via* Weller's Bay to the outlets of either routes No. 2 or No. 3.

"Weller's Bay, however, lies in the direct line of the proposed navigation, and has now the full depth required; whereas the entrance to route No. 1 lies entirely out of that line, and can only be approached by a circuitous channel, to be dredged through Presqu'Isle harbor. It therefore appears that the distance from the mouth of the latter to the Bay of Quinté in route No. 1 should be compared with that from the Weller's Bay entrance to routes Nos. 2 and 3 to the Bay of Quinté. This would show the length *via* the former route to be about three times greater than that by either of the other two."

Now, there we have a direct contradiction of the representations of the Minister when he laid this matter before the Council. The Minister tells the Council that the cost of an 80-foot wide canal *via* Presqu'Isle would be \$721,000, and that the cost of the same kind of a canal by the Weller's Bay route would be \$1,229,000. We find that already a mistake was made in the estimate, because the Council decided on a canal to cost \$721,000, whereas the present estimate is \$1,260,000. A comparison being made with the cost of the Weller's Bay canal, which was estimated at \$1,229,000. Mr. Page's estimate for that canal was \$860,000, and the Government must have had this report before their eyes at the time they made their selection, and I merely point out that in the matter of cost a representation was made to the Council which the facts do not bear out nor justify. These representations were made to the Governor in Council by the Minister:

"That with reference to the route *via* Weller's Bay, it appears to be a fact, from the evidence obtained, that the channel across the bar at that place is of a shifting character, and that its position or direction is not to be depended on after a storm; also, that while the harbor affords good holding ground and deep water, it gives no shelter from the heavy sea rolling in from the lake before south-westerly or westerly gales."

I believe the report of Mr. Rubidge justifies those remarks, so far as the bay is concerned; but Mr. Page, in his report, says of Weller's Bay: