

winter, from November to April, it is very difficult and uncertain owing to heavy ice. I have seen three days at a time that no boats could cross, either ferry or Railway boats. The ice is always dangerous and cannot be safely crossed on foot; I only recollect one or two days it could be so crossed; I recollect several parties being nearly drowned.

Have you ever heard Detroit business men saying they would have their residence in Canada if the means of crossing was good at all seasons?— Yes frequently, and they regretted that they could not do so, the ground in Canada side being so much better situated for residences, but the uncertainty of crossing hindered them attending their business.

And then he withdrew.

The Committee deliberated and

Mr. *Irving* being called upon to establish the power of the Great Western Railway Company to cross the Detroit River by a Tunnel or Bridge, cited the following Acts of Parliament, 4 Wm. IV., cap. 9, sec. 9–16 Vic. cap. 99, sec. 4, and 22 Vic., cap. 116, sec. 11.

And then he withdrew.

*George Lowe Reid*, Esq., Civil Engineer, of Hamilton, appeared on behalf of the Great Western Railway Co., and made the following statement: I am the Chief Engineer of the Great Western Railway Company, and have had the charge of its Engineering works for about fifteen years.

The subject of bridging or tunnelling the Detroit River has engaged the attention of the Great Western Railway Company for several years past.

It was feared—that the objections which might be raised to the construction of a bridge across such an important and frontier channel of Inland Navigation, would prevent the Great Western Railway Company of availing themselves of their powers to cross the River, and accordingly, during the past Fall and Winter, steps were taken to determine the practicability of a tunnel to connect their Railway with those of the State of Michigan, which terminate in the City of Detroit.

The prosecution of this survey involved a series of accurate soundings and borings taken at intervals across the whole of the width of the River, which has been a work of considerable expense.

A Tunnel constructed of masonry under the bed of River, which is forty feet in depth, with approaches of a practicable grade on either side, would involve a total length of Tunnelling of about fifteen thousand feet, or nearly three miles, and the cost would not be less than from three to four millions of dollars.

On account of the great magnitude of a Tunnel and cost of a Tunnel built in this manner, it became extremely desirable to ascertain with some degree of certainty, whether a Tunnel or Tube of wrought iron could not be sunk in sections in the bed of the River (in a Trench to be dredged out of it) leaving a clear depth of twenty-five feet above the top of said iron tube, seeing that the length and cost of a Tunnel thus constructed, would be much less than one built of masonry in the ordinary manner; but such detailed surveys consume a considerable length of time, and until they are finished it is impossible to determine the best location for the Tunnel and its approaches, or to prepare a perfectly accurate estimate of its cost.

The Great Western Railway Company have not yet completed these detailed surveys, and they are consequently unable as yet to take any decided course of action towards the commencement of the work.

In these circumstances the Railway Company oppose the petition for a charter, because they would then be deprived of any voice in the selection of a location of a work in which they are the parties chiefly interested.

Without the traffic of the Great Western and Michigan Central Railways, the revenue of the Tunnel could not even pay the cost of its proper maintenance.

The necessity for a Tunnel has only forced itself upon the consideration of the G.W.R. Company within the past two years, when it had become apparent that the traffic had exceeded the capacity of the ordinary steam Ferry Boats in the use for many years past, they constructed an Iron Steamer of great capacity and power, whereby 14 to 16 cars could be transported over the river without breaking bulk, in a space of 15 or 20 minutes. At present that system of transit is found to be sufficient; but the advancing growth of the Traffic with the Western States has impressed upon them the necessity of meeting the requirements of the future by effecting a still more rapid communication between the two sides