

It is strange that any one occupying the responsible position of Chief Engineer should have allowed himself to make statements so entirely at variance with the facts. The Minister of Public Works, or any one taking an interest in the matter, could see any day in Ottawa, by looking at the combined locks at the entrance of the Rideau Canal, plainly visible from Dufferin Bridge, that these statements are incorrect. The tunnels of these locks are *not filled up*, and the locks are *not filled through the gates*, as stated, but on the contrary they are filled through the tunnels just as they were forty years ago.

It has been remarked that Dufferin Bridge in winter is the coldest place in Canada. If, then, as Mr. Page asserts, the severity of the frost was the reason for filling up the tunnels, how does it happen that these at Ottawa, which are more exposed than at any other place, are still open and in use? And if we refer to those mentioned on the Erie Canal, where the frost is quite as severe as at the Welland, what ground can there be for drawing the general conclusion that tunnels are inadmissible in our climate? The fact may now be stated, to which he has failed to refer, that on the Welland Canal the tunnels would not be liable to the action of frost, because, being always considerably under the surface of the water, they are not exposed to its influence as are the chain-holes, or passages made in the walls for the chains intended for working the gates. If frost was any objection to tunnels, much more would it be to the chain-holes which he himself has provided.

Again, in considering the question of tunnels, he does not confine himself to the simple idea of a culvert of masonry, as suggested by the Board of Engineers, but imports into it his own crude notions of wrought and cast-iron pipes, mixing up his views with theirs, as if they were in some way connected with their plan, and then states that it would involve an additional outlay of fifty thousand dollars at each lock, or one million of dollars for that purpose alone. No details of this estimate are given. It is to be taken entirely upon his own credibility. But that it is recklessly put forward to cover the defects of his own plans, must be apparent to any one practically acquainted with such matters if he considers that the statement amounts to this, that twenty-four locks can be constructed on his plan, for one million dollars less than the twenty locks proposed by the Board of Engineers; which is absurd.

In my next letter I intend to refer to the question of cost, and bring this series of letters to a close.

DOVER STREET, PICCADILLY,
LONDON, SEPTEMBER 22, 1874.

XI.

As promised in my last, I now proceed to examine

THE ESTIMATE

of the Chief Engineer, which he laid before the Public Works Department, in his report of the 12th March, 1873, in support of his own plans.

In looking through this report for the basis upon which it rests, it will be found in clause 97 that the tunnel system for the locks is charged with one million of dollars; and with regard to the other million referred to in the 108th clause, one is only left to conjecture that, as he reported that the line through Thorald would "*dig the very heart out of the place*," and also render the Welland Railway "*practically worthless*," the destruction of the village, and the purchase of the Railway are the two items to covered by this amount.

If this be so, and I can see no other foundation for it, then I must refer to my previous letter to dispel any apprehensions that might be entertained from the sensational notions advanced in regard to the two latter subjects; and will now proceed to consider the first mentioned, the tunnel system for the locks, along with the whole question of cost between the present plan, and that recommended by the Board of Engineers.