

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

A Voice from the Country.

SIR,—There seems to be grave doubts in the minds of many of our would-be leaders of public opinion with respect to the feasibility of the construction of a subway or tunnel between this Island and the mainland. Why such doubts should be entertained by any enlightened individual of the nineteenth century it is a little difficult to understand. From information received from reliable sources bearing on the history of subways in other parts of the world, together with the facts laid before us after a survey, by competent engineers, of the proposed route for a submarine tunnel between this Island and New Brunswick, we are fully warranted in believing that such a scheme is practicable. Unfortunately for the country, we possess in our midst a class of people who become greatly alarmed at the introduction of every public question calculated to promote our material or social interests. If these pessimistic croakers were confined like garrulous old cronies, to their own chimney nooks, it would not be so bad; but they find access to the public newspapers, and through this medium reach the public mind with their doleful predictions of the insurmountable difficulties that lie in the way of every public undertaking, and the inevitable ruin and disaster that must speedily follow in its wake. Such individuals lack the progressive spirit of the age, and view all additional means of public improvement with a degree of distrust known only to the narrow-minded old-timer, who still lives in the dim past and clings to the memories of long ago. They believe that the ingenuity, skill and enterprise of the present age are exhausted, and that we have reached that stage in our history when all schemes of public enterprise for the development of our material resources, the improvement of our trade and the increase of our social advantages, have reached the highest point. All attempts to provide ways and means for laying a Subway across the Straits arouse the opposition and stir the ridicule of those croakers. They hate innovation and are opposed to progress. They believe the time for a Subway has not arrived, and think it a visionary scheme, the cost of which would drain the general revenue. These atrocious obstructionists are, no doubt, the lineal descendants of that non-progressive class who, in times gone by, mourned over all attempts at the introduction of steam navigation, railroads and telegraphy. Their opposition and ridicule we must expect, but both will prove unavailing to stay the onward march of progress. The Subway we shall have within a few years, if the people of this Province stand true to its best interests and unitedly demand our rights. We cannot, of course, hope for much in this direction during the present terms of the Dominion Parliament. The men who are supposed to represent our interest there do not believe in Subways. They have staked their all on unrestricted one-sided free trade with the United States as the great panacea for all our financial and social ills. They promised the people free trade and a new government at the last general election, and carried the three Counties triumphantly by this means; but the honest yeomanry are now beginning to see that they have been deluded into voting for a will-o'-the-wisp, in order to provide seats of honor at Ottawa for such magnates as Stanislau Perry & Co.

There is no question of such vital importance to the true interest of this Province, discussed through our public journals at the present time, as the construction of a submarine tunnel to connect us with the mainland. We shall then have continuous communication with other parts of the world at all seasons of the year, unchecked by the severe frosts of winter or the heavy ice around our shores. We shall then have uninterrupted trade with the outside world, and access to its markets with all our varied products of river and soil during the cold months of winter and in the warm months of summer. We shall not then be confined to the narrow limits prescribed by our isolated, ice-bound condition during six months of the year. Complete stagnation of trade during the winter months will then become, with us a thing of the past, and all lines of industry will awaken into fresh vigor, and our agricultural resources will develop with rapid strides in consequence of the increased advantages afforded by our additional six months trade with other countries by means of the submarine tunnel. The loss to this Island sustained by our present isolated condition will then be at an end, and we shall feel ourselves placed on an equal footing with the people of the other Provinces who enjoy the many privileges, arising out of continuous communication with the outside world during the season of the year when it becomes our unhappy lot to suffer that seclusion which croakers and old-timers do their utmost to perpetuate.

With representatives at Ottawa of the proper political stripe to urge our claims before Parliament, the Government would feel in duty bound to recognize our right to the subway in fulfillment of the terms upon which we entered confederation. But no such boon as this can be expected under existing circumstances. A mistake was committed at the last Dominion election by the people of this Island in returning Opposition candidates to occupy the cool shades. One of the results of this egregious blunder has been to retard the movement begun by patriotic men towards a clearer understanding on the part of the Government on the one hand and the people of the lower provinces on the other with respect to the nature and cost of the subway.

The estimated cost of laying a subway or tunnel across the strait along the proposed line is five million dollars. The estimated population of Canada is five millions, so that the amount expended at 4 per cent. interest would be an addition of four cents per capita to our present burden of taxation. Even this amount would be materially lessened by the profits arising from the conveyance of freight through the tunnel, provided a toll system of some kind should be adopted.

At the next general election of representatives for Ottawa this question should be brought before the people and only men who are willing to carry out our views on this head deserve the support of the electors. We have had enough of the delusive promises of free trade and the overthrow of Tory government. We now want men who can serve our interests at Ottawa; and these are certainly not six Croakers filling seats in the Opposition.

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