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The "Soo" Bridge

The "Soo" bridge is being built by four railroads in conjunction with the GT, CPR, DSS&A and the MSSM&A. The contracts have all be awarded. The contract for the entire substructure has been let to the well known bridge builder, J. Reid. The high price of iron and steel in the United States, sustained by the protective tariff, compared with the low price in Canada of imported British metal, enabled the Dominion Bridge company, whose works are at Lachine, Que., to so far underbid all American builders in the competition for the steel and the iron works. The consequence was that the Dominion Bridge company obtained the contract for the entire superstructure with the exception of the drawbridge. The contract for this portion of the work has been taken by the Detroit Bridge & Iron Works. The material for the Dominion company's contract is being prepared in Scotland and will be worked into shape in the shops at Lachine. The bridge will be in condition to run trains over some time this fall.

On the American side the bridge will be approached by an embankment or filling with a stone abutment near the edge of the canal. Near the opposite side of the canal, leaving room for only the necessary paths, will be the pivot pier, 30 feet in diameter, on which the draw will swing. The center of the pier will be 200 feet from the abutment before mentioned. 200 feet further on will be another abutment, upon which the further end of the draw or swing will rest. Between the further pier and the further abutment is a space through which a second canal may be cut should occasion require.

The entire length of the draw or swing is 400 feet. It will be moved by steam, and may be opened or shut in one and a half minutes. Beyond the farther abutment will be a second filling from 300 to 400 feet long. Then comes the bridge proper, consisting of ten spans of 239 feet each. Following this is a filling of about 500 feet on the Canadian side, then two spans of 104 feet over a slough, and after that the solid ground. The piers will measure 8 x 24 feet under the coping, with necessary abutments.

The kind of stone to be used is not yet decided upon, but it will probably be limestone. The piers will stand somewhere between 15 and 25 feet above the surface and will be securely anchored to the bedrock of the river, which is six to twenty feet below the surface. The work will be done by means of coffer dams, three of which will be worked at the same time. The extreme rapidity of the current will render the building of the dams very difficult. The superstructure will be of iron, built in the American pin-connected truss style. The entire length of the bridge and approaches will be about three-quarters of a mile long.