

has exhibited every disposition to furnish the information which he is competent to give." By the material I understand the facts, and no report could be made, by any committee, after a serious investigation for months, with power to administer oaths, and send for persons and papers, in terms more confident and positive. Yet they say they are largely indebted for the material to the efficient officers of the company, and especially to the chief engineer. If there be any part of the material derived from any other source, it is not stated by the committee. If the labors of the committee were intended as a trial of the competency of the officers, it does not comport with my notions of regular proceeding in such cases, to conduct the investigation solely upon the testimony of the persons arraigned. Four or five days explanation of a line of work of one hundred and eighty miles does not appear sufficient to ascertain its minute details with such particularity, and it seems to me that the material upon which such high commendation is given, could have been obtained from no other source than the efficient officers, especially the chief engineer. If the committee have had the testimony of disinterested scientific men, familiar with the work, or who have examined it, I am not apprised of the fact; and if the report be, in any manner, made upon such testimony, not having heard of it, it would be manifestly improper for me to join in the report. None of the committee, I believe, pretend to be engineers. They say, (see page 31,) "In relation to certain branches, they feel themselves *incompetent* to form an opinion how far the best interests of the company require that the expense should be increased or diminished; *neither their time nor their knowledge of the duties and personal qualification of the officers respectively would enable them to form definite ideas on this subject.*"

I did not feel myself called upon to examine and report, without evidence, upon matters of which I, not being an engineer, was incompetent to judge. The mechanical part of the work is certainly neatly and handsomely executed; but this is not conclusive with respect to the arrangement, general plan of construction, and other proceedings of the company, of which the committee had little opportunity of judging, and in which consist, principally, the diligence, fidelity and skill of the officers. It is the nature of man to attach a higher value to his own productions than they intrinsically deserve, and if the officers of the company have fallen into this error, it is only one of the common frailties of mankind. The vast disappointments of the State of Maryland, with regard to the cost and time of construction of this work, I am not prepared to say, have not resulted from want of skill.

I am not disposed to ascribe any unworthy, or corrupt motives, to the old canal board, if the facts would justify such an imputation, which does not appear to be the case. No persons, are characterized by more courteous, and gentlemanly de-