

for the non-performance of duty, which is impracticable in the present state of things, to have some excuse—my successor can alone say whether this was the inducement to get up the charge of *the abstraction of important papers*. (I refer to those particularly complained of as being absent, in reference to a revised estimate.)

I will here state to the committee that the late principal assistant engineer, who had been in charge of the Old Town division, and who was dismissed the 25th of last September, upon one week's notice when leaving Old Town, gave instructions to his late assistant who remained in charge of the papers to transfer them to any one who should be named, upon *the order of the Chief Engineer*, who was at that time myself. He was not, then, aware that my own dismissal was to take place in five days. But while I was still in office it appears that the present Chief Engineer, *then a Principal Assistant*, and whose duties had just been extended over the Old Town division, directed his assistant to apply for the papers, but they were not handed over by the person in charge in consequence of the preceding order of the late principal assistant that they should be transferred upon the order of the chief engineer. But as chief engineer, I had given no order, because *I had no official notice of what was going on*. The order for my own dismissal being almost the only one that had been officially communicated to me for a long time.

Learning what had occurred under the *further reduction* of September 26th, the former principal assistant on the 19th of October, having hastily arranged the papers, &c., addressed a letter to the clerk of the company, enclosing an order upon the person who had it in possession, to deliver over the key of the room in which the papers were, to such person as might be designated. So that the papers instead of being "pertinaciously withheld," as my successor says, "until the 15th of November when they were at last turned over," were actually at the command of the company for more than three weeks before that day. The clerk of the company must have forgotten the letter of the 19th of October, as I should suppose that he would not have allowed the publication of the erroneous statement without an accompanying explanation.

I speak above of having received no official notice, &c. I must add that omissions as to mere matters of form in my intercourse with the Board would not have caused much, if any,