

The following contracts were entered into, together with requisitions for spares, &c. :—

1 Bay City Dredge-works—						\$
One walking-dredge .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	11,600-00
One dipper dredge .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	9,000-00
						<hr/> 20,600-00
2. Bucyrus Company—						
Two gasoline excavators at \$22,020 each .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	44,040-00
3. Monighan Machine-works—						
Two walking-excavators at \$21,150 each .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	42,300-00
4. Michigan Dredge Company—						
One walking-dredge .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	15,239-00
5. Rood Construction Company—						
One walking-dredge .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	21,315-00
6. American Steel Dredge Company—						
Two oil dippers at \$20,250 each .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	40,500-00
Two steam dippers at \$16,250 each .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	32,500-00
Two steel hulls at \$7,500 each .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	15,000-00
7. (Not placed.)						
8. Bucyrus Company—						
Three steam-shovel drag-line excavators at \$19,725 each, and						
one set of spares, \$2,850 .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	62,025-00
9. Ingersoll-Rand Company—						
Complete gasoline-driven rock-drilling equipment .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	32,606-50
10. Fate-Root-Heath Company—						
Two petrol locomotives at \$2,850 each, and one set of spares,						
\$473-49 .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	6,173-49

Requisitions issued.

1. Bay City Dredge-works : Spare parts .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	642-00
2. Michigan Dredge Company : Spare parts .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	862-20
3. Monighan Machine-works : Spare parts .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	1,689-35
4. Sanborn Company : Flow-recorders .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	314-10
5. Commercial Camera Company : Photostat, &c .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	1,435-50
6. Bucyrus Company : Spare parts .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	2,637-00
7. W. and E. Gurley : Current-meter, &c. .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	214-95
8. Fate-Root-Heath Company : One petrol locomotive .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	2,850-00
9. Bay City Dredge-works : Spare parts and extras .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	727-13
10. Sullivan Machinery Company : Drills and spare parts .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	1,277-10
11. Michigan Dredge Company : Spare parts .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	679-35
12. Ingersoll-Rand Company : Spare parts .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	1,845-17

\$347,472-74

The foregoing represent quite the most up-to-date plants available, and all are standard equipment. No single item is experimental; all are in common and daily use in the United States. They are all up to their work and proven out. Necessarily, there will be breakdowns and stoppages, however well handled; but allowance must also be made for delays in first instance due to machines having crews who are entirely new to this class of plant. The crews will have to master each machine; and, outside of structural failure, it lies entirely with the personal element to operate the machine as it should be operated. Everything depends on the operator, as he will undoubtedly have a good tool in his hands.

The internal-combustion plants are intended for localities where, on account of transport difficulties, coal-delivery is difficult.

The Bureau of Public Roads, Department of Public Roads, Washington, D.C., very courteously attended to the inspection and passing of each plant at the factory, but our contracts cover replacement of any structural defects that occur within three months of erection in the Dominion.

The various machines, &c., had to come under such weights as we could handle and transport at this end, and this is limited. Machines of greater capacity than that selected would have been beyond our means of local transport and handling.

PROPOSED DISTRIBUTION OF MACHINERY AND SUPPLIES.

Consideration.—In the past the Lands Department has been forced to open up further construction works on several areas owing to the success attending the Hauraki Plains drainage. Attempts have uniformly been made to let contracts for the major works, but have failed on account of no contractors possessing the necessary machinery; and no doubt labour troubles have contributed. The Department was thus compelled to undertake its own operations, and as far as possible procured machinery for the purpose. Such operations have been very successful, considering the lack of