

and amounts of lumber, for all ordinary cases. The actual cost to the contractor, of an ordinary county bridge of one hundred feet span and sixteen feet clear roadway, can be seen from the following estimate:—

Wrought-iron, 27,900 lbs. at 5c. . . . .	\$1,395 00
Lumber, 10,880 ft. at \$18 per M. . . . .	195 84
Hauling, 20 loads, at \$1.50 . . . . .	30 00
Framing . . . . .	7 00
Falsework . . . . .	25 00
Erection . . . . .	150 00
Painting . . . . .	25 00
Blacksmithing . . . . .	5 00
Coal . . . . .	2 00
Freight on tools . . . . .	15 00
Travelling-expenses . . . . .	30 00
Men's time travelling . . . . .	20 00
Bidding-expenses . . . . .	40 00
Teaming during construction . . . . .	10 00
Incidentals. . . . .	50 00
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Total cost of bridge . . . . .	\$1,999 84
Cost per lineal foot, say . . . . .	20 00

Adding twenty per cent for profit would make the bridge cost the county \$2,400. Now, suppose there are ten other bidders present, each of whose expense for time and travelling is forty dollars; then there will be an additional four hundred dollars to be added to the cost of this or some other bridge, for, as before stated, some one must pay it. Eleven is by no means an unusual number of bidders for a small span: there are often as many as fifteen or sixteen.

The estimate for forty dollars for time and travelling-expenses is not excessive, as the author, who has attended a number of lettings, can testify.

These four hundred dollars are worth saving, if it can be done legitimately.

As for bids secretly opened always leading to the suspicion of unfair practices, it is indeed true; and there is no way of avoiding the difficulty, except by having them opened by a committee of public men who are above suspicion. These could be