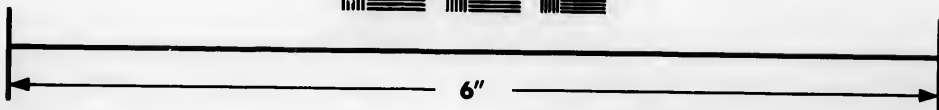
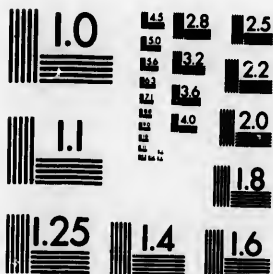


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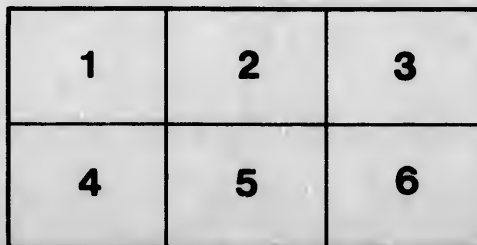
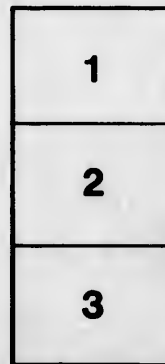
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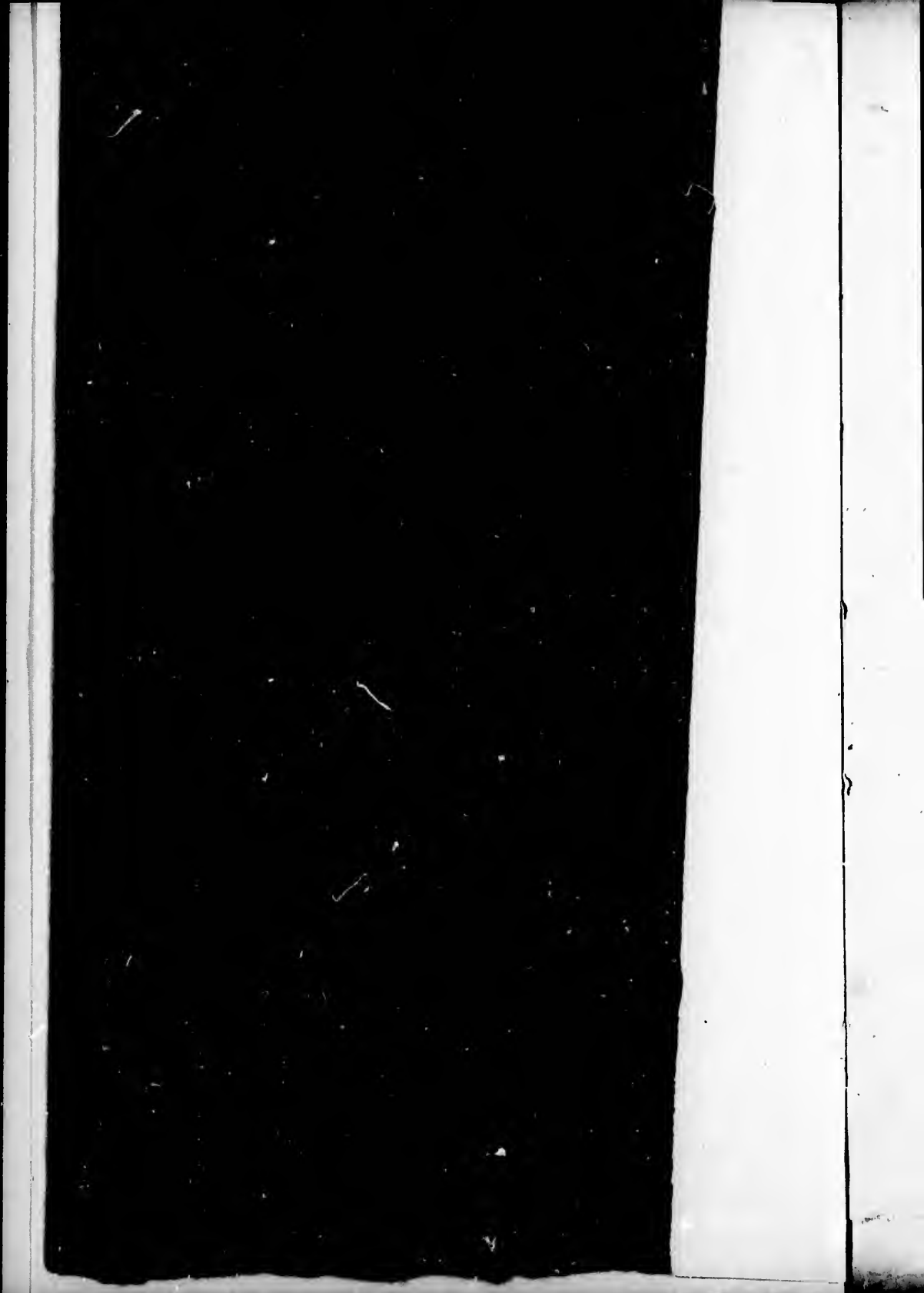
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J. Wilson Esq

REMARKS

ON THE

LACHINE CANAL.

MONTREAL:

PRINTED BY JAMES BROWN,

No. 20, St. FRANCOIS-XAVIER STREET,

OPPOSITE THE SEMINARY.

1822.

1777

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REMARKS
ON THE
LACHINE CANAL.

OF all the obstacles which militate against public improvements, none is more powerful in its effects, more pernicious in its consequences, or more deserving of reprobation, than an inordinate degree of *self-interestedness*. Wherever this feeling is allowed to appear in opposition to the public good, it rises like a baneful blight, and by assertions, true or false, by every cunning device and deceitful stratagem which it can invent, operates in *preventing* the commencement—*retarding* the progress, and by *defeating* the best laid schemes, not unfrequently mars the result of undertakings which if allowed to proceed would confer the most essential service on the community at large.

THESE observations it is to be feared have been too strikingly illustrated in the contests and disputes relative to the direction in which the La Chine Canal ought to proceed. For although it was to be hoped that all differences and contentions respecting its route, extent and termination, &c. had been adjusted by the last Legislative enactment for making that Canal—(and which although its general utility was then circumscribed far

within what it would be, if properly completed) yet it appears that a third plan (from the same party who have all along opposed its extension to the Cross) is now in agitation to have its course altered so as to cramp its usefulness still farther. But a brief detail of the various proceedings relative to this important work from the time it was first seriously agitated to the present period will best exhibit, how actively, and unceasingly this selfish principle has been employed respecting it.

At first it was resolved to follow that plan which common sense, and the opinions of scientific men dictated as the best; and the Canal was to extend from La Chine to the foot of the Current St. Mary or to the Cross through the city of Montreal, thereby answering every intention which could be desired in a work for the public good—for according to this plan it would have at once accomplished the wished for object by overcoming the impediments in the river St. Lawrence, between La Chine and the Cross, and by proceeding in this way the greatest possible portion of the community would have participated in the benefits arising from it.

The propriety (nay the necessity) of its being carried to this extent was pointed out in the following remarks on the subject drawn up at the time this question was in agitation.

From the Montreal Herald, 13th February, 1819.

“We have been led to understand that a difference of opinion exists respecting the place where the Canal should join the St. Lawrence. Some maintain that it should fall into the river at the present Port, of

"Montreal; while others with more propriety and cer-
 "tainly with more correct views respecting its general
 "utility, wish it to be carried below the Current (St.
 "Mary's). This last is certainly the preferable plan,
 "and if it should be attended with an additional expence
 "(which is by no means certain) a pitiful saving upon a
 "work of so great public importance would be highly
 "improper. The current from the Port to the Cross
 "(foot of the current) forms one of the greatest obstacles
 "to our Montreal navigation, although our Steam-Boats
 "in a great measure obviate this; yet with the view of
 "facilitating the access to our river craft; and such ves-
 "sels as come from sea, it would be of the utmost im-
 "portance to extend the Canal to the Cross. Indeed it
 "must be obvious to every one, that unless this be done,
 "the chief impediments in the navigation to La Chine
 "are but partially removed. Loaded boats crossing from
 "the opposite side below the island, and those coming
 "from the island St. Helen (now about to be made a
 "depot for government stores) seldom make the Mon-
 "treal side above the Brick Store. It is also well known
 "that it takes as much time to bring them from thence
 "to the Port, as to bring them from Bout de l'Isle to
 "that place. If therefore the canal joined the river at
 "the Brick Store, (now a naval depot,) boats entering
 "at that point might reach Lachine (by the canal) nearly
 "as soon as they could be brought up to the port at
 "Montreal; a circumstance of no small consideration if
 "these boats on the canal should ever be employed to
 "transport government stores. To obviate or answer
 "this end, those who maintain that the canal should
 "enter at the port of Montreal, propose to have a tow-
 "ing-path from the Cross to the harbour, and that bat-

"teaux and other craft should be brought up by horses.
 "This is a thing totally impracticable from the existing
 "nature of affairs. During a great part of the summer
 "the bay or eddy opposite to the island, is filled with
 "rafts, and the beach is covered with staves, boards,
 "and other lumber, piled up so as to impede any towing
 "path which could be made. A little further out from
 "the shore the water is too deep to use setting poles, and
 "the rapidity of the current must necessarily prevent
 "the vessels being carried up by oars. Besides to form
 "such a path and keep it in repair where it is liable (al-
 "most certain) to be broken up every season by the ac-
 "cumulation of ice, and to enlarge our harbour from
 "what it is at present would require a greater capital,
 "than to extend the canal to the foot of the current.*
 "Under these circumstances therefore we should readily
 "subscribe to the idea of carrying the canal through
 "the town so as to join the St. Lawrence at the Cross.
 "And if the meadows behind the Champ de Mars
 "(which are by nature formed for the purpose) were
 "made into a bason or harbour, the dues arising from it
 "would be amply sufficient to recompence the stock-
 "holders for the additional monies which would be re-
 "quired to extend the canal to the Cross. And this
 "would be more effectually the case if that part of the
 "canal lying between this bason and the foot of the cur-
 "rent where it joins the St. Lawrence were excavated
 "to such a depth as to admit vessels drawing 16 or 18

(* The danger from the effects of the ice happens twice every
 year in this place. It always moves once (perhaps twice) in the
 beginning of the winter when it sets, and in spring when it
 breaks up it goes with such violence as to tear up earth and stones
 weighing several tons along with it.)

"feet of water. At the same time, a lateral branch of
 "the canal might be made so as to pass off at some point
 "near the Brewery in the Recollet Suburbs to fall in at
 "the present port of Montreal; and this branch might
 "be made of a smaller size as it would be required on-
 "ly for such goods as might be brought to the Port from
 "the Upper Province, or for what might be sent there
 "from that place.—From all this we sincerely hope that
 "our Legislature will feel inclined to accord with the
 "wishes of the present applicants, and while they grant
 "them the privilege of cutting the canal from Montreal
 "to Lachine, they will also see the propriety of enabling
 "them to make it so as to join the St. Lawrence at the
 "foot of the current St. Mary in the first instance, and
 "at the same time enable them to make the lateral
 "branch to the Port should they hereafter find it ne-
 "cessary."

AGAIN in the Herald of the 20th February, 1819,
 the same subject is taken up in the following extract:

"IN works of great public utility, like the one in
 "question, a regard ought to be had to futurity as well
 "as to the present time, otherwise the benefit arising
 "from them must be very circumscribed. Such men as
 "have performed any great public undertaking, without
 "attention to this principle have often had reason to re-
 "gret their illiberal and contracted notions, during their
 "lives; and instead of their names being handed down
 "to posterity with applause and gratitude for their spi-
 "rited exertions, future generations have reproached
 "their memories, and despised them for their imbecili-
 "ty in having done that by halves which they might

"have accomplished effectually. This will undoubtedly
 "ly be the case with the Lachine Canal, should it be
 "brought to the port of Montreal instead of entering
 "the river below the current. The port of Montreal is
 "too small for our commerce at the present day, and
 "from its local situation there is no means of enlarging
 "it. If therefore its contracted size be attended with
 "inconvenience for our present trade, what will it be at
 "no very distant period when the country bordering on
 "the lakes and rivers which fall into the St. Lawrence
 "becomes settled and under cultivation, and when our
 "trade will be increased several hundred fold. And
 "this we should think a sufficient reason for prolonging
 "the canal to the Cross, where harbours or basons
 "might be made sufficiently large for the increase that
 "we may fairly expect in our commerce hereafter, were
 "there no other advantages to be reaped from extend-
 "ing it thus far."

So much for the way in which this subject was argued
 when first under discussion: we shall see by and by to
 what conclusion these strong arguments led.

THE urgent necessity for a Canal in this place, the
 great advantages which would result to the public from
 it, combined with the reasonableness of their request,
 and the clear demonstration that this was the proper
 direction and extent it ought to have, induced the Le-
 gislature at the time to comply with the public wish, and
 a Company was incorporated to make the Lachine Canal
 from funds to be raised by a joint stock to be held in
 shares; and by this act of incorporation the said Com-
 pany, were obliged to make this Canal from Lachine

The foot of the Current St Mary IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, with a lateral branch going from the most convenient point of it to the present Port. Reasonable and expedient as all this was, and although the Act was carefully framed so as to meet the wishes of all parties as far as consistent with the public good; this was not obtained without some opposition, and even after being passed, could not prevent some individuals attempting to frustrate it. Those who held property in the vicinity of the Port instantly took the alarm. They soon discovered (or pretended to discover) that if the Canal passed through the Town to the Cross, vessels from sea and river craft would stop at the foot of it, and send their cargoes up from thence by the Canal in boats, or lodge them in stores which might be built there for their reception. They began to suspect that in time the bulk of the business might be removed from the present Port to the Cross, and foresaw that such a change would produce a depreciation in the value of their stores, &c. around the Port. This idea immediately called up the action of the hurtful principle (inordinate self-interest) mentioned in the outset, and set it to work to frustrate the plan. It was a stretch of generosity beyond their mode of acting to make any sacrifice for a public good, however great or however necessary, if such a sacrifice involved any loss to their *dear selves*. The arguments they employed on this occasion will be noticed hereafter, when it will also be shown, that it is the same party and the same principle now struggling to obtain a third alteration in the direction of this Canal, which has all along been exerting itself to prevent its extension to the Cross: for the present it is sufficient to observe that at the time alluded to their representations (rather misrepresentations) prevailed

so far with Governement, as to saddle the Company with the additional expense of a lateral branch to the Port, (the utility of which, by the bye, has never been shown) although they were not able in the face of common sense to prevent the Canal's being extended to the foot of the Current.

THIS side cut (or lateral branch) had the effect of shutting their mouths for the moment, and the work might have gone on well agreeable to the provisions of that act, had it been practicable to carry them into effect at the time.

BUT those opposed to the plan of extending the canal to the Cross, tried many manoeuvres for the purpose of defeating it. They first contrived to get some clauses introduced into the act which operated as a preventative against the stock's being taken up, and afterwards by raising a jealousy among the friends and partisans of the different banks by a foolish dispute as to where the money was to be lodged when collected from the different share holders. This combined with the unfortunate falling off in commercial prosperity at the time had the effect they desired, and before the Company could get the stock taken up, it became necessary to apply to the Legislature for a repeal of the obnoxious clauses in the act.

AN alteration in the manner of accomplishing this great undertaking now became necessary and as the company had intimated their inability to make it according to the Act which had incorporated them, the canal was to be cut at the expence of the Province. The proceedings attendant on this change gave these selfish gen-

gentlemen another opportunity of foisting in their cavellings, objections, and remonstrances. (For they are ever on the watch, that being a property attendant on selfishness.) And in this case they succeeded but too well. Although the government from a conviction of the necessity for its extending to that point would not abandon the plan of its going to the Cross, the opponents to this measure, succeeded in getting the former order of things reversed. The lateral branch which was heretofore only considered as a secondary business, now became a primary object and it was determined that it should be made as soon as the main trunk reached the point where it appeared from the Engineer's plan, the said lateral branch should break off: and the further extension of the main trunk was to be reserved for a future time, before the arrival of which, this same party might perhaps find the means of defeating it altogether. That this, though not the avowed, is the true object of their proceeding may be inferred from various reasons and among others from the support they now give the application for a third change in its direction. For they now wish it to break off at a point still more remote from the Cross, for fear of its ever extending to that place, as they well know the greater a distance it is from its ultimate destination the more arguments they may adduce, and the more impediments they may throw in the way of its ever reaching it. But these gentlemen are not satisfied with all they have heretofore obtained, they wish to make "assurance doubly sure," and have come forward as above noticed praying for a third change in the route and extent of this canal. They now wish the lateral branch to break off from a point never before thought of, and to pursue a direction never till now

dreamt of. It is not proper as these wise heads suppose that this canal should join the river at the Cross, or that its lateral branch should fall in at the Port—but they want the main trunk to come on in the present intended line to near the Turnpike gate (about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles short of the original and proper destination of the canal) and that a branch should break off from that to join the river at the wind mills. The falacy of the arguments adduced in support of this absurd plan will be shown when we come to examine the petition they have got up for it. For the present it is only necessary to observe that such a direction would be entirely incompatible with the original object and sole intention for which this canal was made. By the Lachine Canal it was intended to obviate the impediments in the river St. Lawrence below Lachine. These impediments consist of a chain of rapids commencing at this last place and extending down the river with little interruption to the foot of St. Mary's current at the Cross below Montreal. It is evident that any canal made for the purpose of obviating these ought to embrace the whole of them in its course, by emanating from the river above the highest and entering it below the lowest of them. But if the plan now proposed by these gentlemen be adopted the Lachine Canal will fall into the river a little below the middle of these rapids, and at a point where its lower end will be totally inaccessible, without first expending a large sum of money to deepen the river below it. Absurd as this plan is it has found some to aid and abet it, acting upon the selfish maxim, "*take care of yourself never mind the public good.*" Together with all those who originally opposed the canal's being extended to the Cross, such as have property around the wind mills and which would have

its value enhanced by this change in the canal line have readily come into this proposal, and not only given their sanction to the petition themselves but used their influence in getting signatures to it, and in this way the original non-contents have received a reinforcement.

As it has been seen that all this opposition to the original plan of this canal—and all the various quirks and quibbles which have been tried to effect an alteration in its course, were brought forward with the design of defeating or protracting its original object, it may not be amiss to examine some of the arguments these gentlemen have adduced in favour of their schemes, for they have with a little deviation adapted to circumstances been the same in all cases. It is not usual for those who have a sinister object to attain, to declare openly and candidly the true cause of their acting in the manner they do, nor to use such arguments as would admit of their real designs being seen through. This principle was displayed in the point in question. Few would have been ready to side with these characters had they openly avowed "*we wish the canal to pass in such and such a direction because it will benefit us to the prejudice of the Public.*" Other methods must be resorted to, and they commenced by raising the alarm on those whose credulity they could work upon. "If, said they," the canal extends to the Cross, a new and rival town will start up there—that will become the seat of business—Montreal will be thrown in the back ground and all property in it will fall in value, and so forth. Their next pretext if true would have perhaps been more excusable as it had ostensibly the preservation of the trade of Montreal, for its object. They asserted that if the canal should extend

to the Cross the merchants from Upper Canada would pass by it directly to Quebec to make their purchases, and instead of being supplied by Montreal dealers as at present, this would become nothing more than a resting place for them. If the falacy of these arguments and their injurious effect to the public were not sufficient to overset them, they would perhaps meet with their defeat in those interested in the prosperity of Quebec, who have here an opportunity of judging of the *very liberal* principles of these gentlemen. But all this is only as it were raising a shadow to frighten children, and employed to cover their deeper and more selfish designs. They well know the shortness of the distance between Montreal and the Cross will prevent a rival city in trade ever rising up there. They are aware that before a town at the Cross could attain to any important extent it would be joined to Montreal, become one and the same city where property would have its value according to its locality as at present. The bugbear about the Upper Canada merchant descending to Quebec is equally absurd, many of these merchants do so at present when they can afford to make large purchases, the saving on which will defray the expence of the journey, and if the canal was made in the way it ought, those from the upper Province are not such fools as go that distance and incur the expence of time and labour, besides other charges, if the business they have to do will not pay for such outlay.—Next to these specious reasons came their great *knock him down* and last argument which they have employed on all occasions *where it suited their purposes*, and which it was of course to be expected they would use to prevent the canal's extending to the foot of the current. *This is the saving of expence*, for as they pretend it could be made

to the port or to the wind-mills for much less money than it would cost to carry it to the foot of the current. It may not be improper here to observe that although this is one argument these gentlemen have always at hand, they take specious care not to employ it when it would militate against any of their own schemes; a very striking instance of which was seen in their proceeding on this canal. When the spirited company who were incorporated for making this canal at first, in conformity to the opinions of all scientific men represented to the government the necessity of its being extended to the Cross, and when the Legislature convinced of the propriety of its being so, passed an act to that effect, then came "the tug of words," and says this party "we must have a lateral branch, a branch from the main trunk to the port by all means;" no word in that case of the expence—no, (although knowing that the funds were then to be raised by a company in shares, and well aware there would be difficulty in getting the stock subscribed from the scarcity of money,) this party did not hesitate to burden the company with the additional expence for cutting and making the lateral branch, but now that the work is to be done at the expence of the Province, save! save! all you can, is their constant cry. This pernicious principle which is so justly held in execration in an individual, amounts to little short of criminality, in those intrusted to carry on any improvement where the public are to bear the costs and to reap the benefit: because if such an improvement be imperfectly done, (which rarely fails to be the case when this *saving* principle predominates too far,) instead of being a benefit to that public, as intended, it becomes an injury, and saddles them with an annual charge to preserve it in an effective state. It

is not necessary to search far for illustrations of this position. Where has there ever been a public work properly accomplished in this country (or any other) where this saving principle was the primary object of consideration to those performing it? The Court-house of this city was built at the expence of government—save, save all! was the object of the Commissioners—the work was done in so flimsy a style that it has already cost more in alterations and repairs, than with the original amount would have built it in a handsome and substantial manner, and a considerable outlay must still be made to keep it in repair. The same thing occurred in building the gaol of this place, a disgrace to any civilized country, and an enormous annual expence to keep it in repair. In both these instances these gentlemen entrusted with them had the honor of *saving* the public money, and that public the pleasure of *gaining a loss!* The locks at the Cascades I believe were built on this famous saving system. They were first too small and had to be pulled down and widened—and even as they are now constructed, will in a few years be found still too small or entirely unsuitable for the purpose they were designed for. One more instance shall suffice. A few years ago the government with a becoming liberality voted 50,000*l.* for internal improvements. It is strongly suspected that this money has been entrusted to some of these saving gentlemen who have saved it so well that hardly a vestige of any part of its being expended in the country is to be seen or any public benefit derived from it. So much for the *honour of saving the public money*, and the blessed effects of this economising principle when exerted where public undertakings are carrying on. Altho' it might be supposed that the baneful effects of this saving system have

been witnessed often enough to cause a discontinuance of it, yet such is its predominance, and so much has been lately said upon it that serious apprehensions are entertained least it should creep in to frustrate the designs or cramp the utility of the Lachine Canal; unless those entrusted with the management of that undertaking exert themselves to prevent it. But it is to be hoped the commissioners for this work will be warned by those employed for superintending public improvements before and avoid the rock they have split upon. While they are careful by taking advantage of the times to make their contracts judiciously, and avoid a foolish or lavish expenditure in this or any other way; they will be equally zealous to guard against this injurious saving plan; so as not to cramp the extent and general utility of the work, or to have it performed in a flimsy and imperfect manner.

BEFORE entering on any remarks relative to the different routes which have been proposed for this canal, or detailing their comparative expence and advantages—it may not be improper to examine this celebrated petition for the canal's diverging from its present line somewhere near the Turnpike gate, and that it may pass in at the Wind mills. This although apparently a new plan, has, as was already mentioned, originated with the same party who first opposed the canal's going to the Cross, and proceeds from the same rotten reason which actuated them in the first instance.

THE grand bait held out in this petition and on which it is said the promoters of it build their hopes of success is the great saving, or diminished price it would cost to

bring the canal by the route they propose, in preference to any other. From this argument taking the lead of all others it may be inferred that some of these *saving-gentlemen* are concerned, and if they propose to save on the Lachine Canal as they have done in the other public works above cited no better reason need be asked for rejecting the petition at once. But we shall hereafter see what this saving would be when we come to estimate the expence of making the canal by the different routes proposed. For although these gentlemen very speciously hold forth the assertion that a saving could be made in that part between where the branch diverges from the trunk near the Turnpike gate and the Wind mills, they have taken care not to say any thing of the great and unnecessary expence which would by this route be unavoidably incurred in opening a water communication for vessels from their Wind mill bason to the port and from thence to the foot of the current. And it deserves to be remarked that even the most zealous advocates for this saving plan and those selfish measures before mentioned, have never dared to advance the absurdity, that the objects or design of this canal would be completed without its removing the obstacles of the navigation as far as the foot of the current St. Mary. On the contrary they have always held out a substitute for this by proposing the ridiculous plan of a towing path from the Port to the last mentioned spot, the absurdity of which or rather its utter impracticability has been already noticed, and will be reverted to hereafter. The great ground work of their saving which they themselves do not consider as more than the greatest part of 15,000*l.* is on the purchase of property. Because the canal in its present line passes through valuable orchards and building lots. On this

principle the very foundation of their argument may be shaken. If it be indispensably necessary to avoid these valuable grounds, this can be effected in an easier way without injuring the general utility of the canal. After leaving the Turnpike gate, (instead of diverging to the south as they wish,) let it bend a shorter distance to the other side, it will then go through lands of trifling value until it comes opposite the head of the St. Antoine Suburb, from whence it can pass parallel to that street until it arrives at the bridge, at the foot of it; and from this the nearest and most convenient point to the port a branch (if still thought necessary) could be taken off to fall into it; which in its course would intersect a spacious and convenient scite for a bason now nearly formed by nature and lying between the bridge leading to Pointe à Callière and that leading to the St. Ann's Suburb. In this way the ostensible wishes of the promoters of this petition could be answered as the canal by this route would pass through little valuable property, except what already belongs to the public. The second inducement held out in this petition is the facility with which a bason could be formed.—In this respect the wind mill route has no advantages over any other, were the canal carried to the Cross as it ought to be, there are plenty of situations in its course far better adapted for basons to suite the public convenience than the little bend in the river at the wind mills. Besides what would be the superior advantages of a bason in the spot above mentioned compared with one at the the Windmills.—It is situated in the centre of the business part of the town, already surrounded with buildings well adapted for stores of every description; so close to the present port that it would have no effect in depreciating the va-

tue of property around it; at a convenient distance from the main trunk of the canal, and lastly to suite their saving views would cost no expence for purchasing and but a trifle for its construction. But the absurdity of this route may be farther seen from the following supposed case, and as the ultimate object of this canal, namely, the carrying it to the Cross has never been abandoned, it is not an improbable supposition. Let us for a moment consider the main trunk of the canal completed from Lachine to the Cross and a surveyor or engineer appointed to examine the most proper place for the branch to lead off to the port. What would be said of him if he proposed its branching off near the Turnpike gate; why certainly he would be considered as a madman, and would perhaps incur the same imputation if he fixed on any other spot or line for this lateral branch than the one above mentioned, namely from the foot of the St. Antoine Suburb to the Port. The last argument they employ in their petition is from the shortness of distance the canal would have to pass by this route over any other. True, the wind mills are nearer Lachine than the Port is, but what has that to do with a canal making for the avowed purpose of joining Lachine and the Cross or foot of the Current. If shortening the distance be their object why ever bring the canal past the Tannery or farther than the Turnpike gate? Other serious obstacles to this direction will be mentioned hereafter, for this windmill route has not one terrible argument in its favour, and were it not well known that it is held forth only to cover other plans, it might justly be compared to some of the schemes laid by Don Quixotte of wind mill memory.

HAVING in the preceding pages developed in some measure the plans and proceedings of those who have opposed the extension of this canal, and also touched upon some of the arguments they, have employed; it only remains by a dispassionate examination of the comparative expence and advantages of the two routes to see which is to be preferred. Some points of this part of the subject have unavoidably been anticipated in the preceding pages, but any thing tending to illustrate the advantages of this work if properly made, or to depreciate the idea of its utility being cramped, or being superficially executed cannot be too deeply impressed on the mind of those engaged in carrying it on.

ALL parties having agreed as to the direction of the main trunk as far as from Lachine to near the turnpike gate, nothing need be said relative to that part of the line. The chief point apparently in contest is as to where the lateral branch shall diverge from the main trunk: and as this branch cannot touch every man's door as to the direction in which it shall proceed. To an impartial mind, this question would appear to have been settled long since. A plan of the whole line was made and had been approved of, and its execution enacted by legislative authority. By that act the Commissioners appointed to see the work done were to continue the main trunk in a specified direction, until it reached a certain point, from which the lateral branch was to break off to the Port, and under this authority, and in conformity to this plan the work was commenced. But the selfish principle so frequently noticed began again to make its appearance, and now wishes the lateral branch to proceed from a different point, and to pas-

in a different direction. Let us now see what would be the expences required to make the canal according to their plan, (that is to have the lateral branch passing off near the Turnpike gate, to the Wind mills, and the obstructions of the navigation from thence to the Cross removed,) and the loss the public would sustain by following the direction they wish. In the first place to excavate the branch from where it would leave the main trunk to the Wind mills, a distance of perhaps more than a mile and a half, would cost 3000*l*. * To make their bason and build a break water or wharf, according to their own account would cost 5000*l*. And as they contemplate having their bason capable of wintering steam-boats—they would require three very large locks to join it to the river so as to admit such vessels. The expence of these could not be less than 400*l*. each, or 12,000*l*. for the whole. Still it is necessary as above stated to get to the port, and excavating the river at this place to the extent they would require could not probably be done for less than 2000*l*. Besides the annual expence of keeping this channel clear cannot be considered less than 150*l*. per annum, thereby swallowing up a capital of 2500*l*. more.

THE probable consequences of making a cut and deepening the river in this place merits some consideration. By letting in more water it would evidently encrease the current between their famous bason and the Port which is already too strong at this place; and as it

* In this and the subsequent calculations no notice has been taken of fractional parts of pounds, and in some cases, for the sake of brevity the odd pounds have been omitted; but this does not affect the general result nor the principle here contended for, relative to the comparative advantages of the two routes.

Is a well known fact that every current carries in its course a deposition which it lodges in the still water below it, where would the deposition in this case be made? Why exactly in the present port? And it requires no great foresight to discover that it would from this cause be filled up and rendered totally useless in a very few years. What then would be the value of the stores and buildings which surround it? In addition to this it ought to be kept in mind that the ice at its setting, every season shoves from the La Prairie side directly towards this point, (Point Blondeau,) and the shallow water and hard bottom here acts as a barrier against it and prevents its coming with all its force against the port or the buildings which surround it. Even the partial change in the current of a river may be attended with unforeseen, but serious consequences.

BUT to revert to the subject of expence we have only got as far as the Port by this route, and as it is universally acknowledged that the obstacles to the navigation below it must be removed, the preposterous plan of a towing path on the river side must be had recourse to. From the present port downwards to nearly opposite the middle of the Quebec Suburb the river near the bank is one continued series of shallows and strong currents, which must be overcome by being deepened, so as to allow boats loaded to be dragged up with facility from the Cross. From the middle of the Quebec Suburb down to the foot of the Current St. Mary, (the Cross,) the river is deep but the current so strong as frequently to delay some of our best steam-boats, in ascending it: and the vexatious detention of vessels in waiting a wind to bring them up is too well known to require comment.

All this has been proposed to be overcome by deepening the river in its shallow places, and making a towing path the whole way. To this however there are many serious objections. The first cost of such a towing path could not be less than 1500*l.* as the distance is little short of two miles. And from its being liable to be broken up every year by the ice, as well as the deepened parts of the river, it to be filled up probably not less than 500*l.* per annum would be required for the purpose, of keeping it in repair which engrosses a capital of 8330*l.* The shallow part of the river could not be deepened for less than 3000*l.* more, thereby making the actual cost of bringing the canal this way and clearing the river to the Cross, 39330*l.* It ought also to be observed, that the construction of a towing path in this place, and the keeping of it in repair, would accelerate the washing away of the banks, to the serious injury of the property on the top of it. But this is not all, to the above sum is to be added the damage and loss the public would sustain by carrying the canal in this direction, and were the towing path made as they wish it. In the first place where would the inhabitants of Montreal who now go to the beach and purchase their fire wood find that necessary article? This plan would induce the necessity of its being brought to their famous bason at the Wind mills or to the Cross, for it could not be landed on a towing path where horses are passing and repassing every minute, far less could it be loaded from the rafts into carts as is now done, for the river being deepened would prevent carts getting at it. Nor is it probable that rafts would anchor so far out in the river as to leave a boats track between them and the beach where they would be constantly exposed to be lost. By this means therefore the inhabitants of Mon-

Montreal would be saddled with the additional expence of about 1s 6d. for the cartage of every cord of fire wood, which in 30,000 cords the quantity brought every year to Montreal by water amounts to 2250*l*. the interest of 37,500*l*. The same would be the fate of all the different kinds of lumber used in Montreal and its vicinity. It could not be brought to the beach as at present, and the extra price to be paid for the cartage of it would amount to as much more—say 37,500*l* more. Another additional expence to the public would arise from the increased price for bringing up every sort of merchandise by the towing path from the Cross besides what it would cost if brought by the Canal, on account of the increased power required in the former case to stem the current. This could not be less than 1*s*. on every ton, as it would require three horses to drag up by the towing path against the current what could be done by one on the smooth water in the canal. Now supposing only 10,000 tons of merchandise brought in this way every year; here is an annual expenditure of 500*l*. or a capital of 8330*l*. locked up by this plan.

THESE are only a few of the inconveniencies and expences the public would sustain by the adoption of this plan. Every thing coming to town by the canal would evidently have to bear the additional expence of cartage from the Wind-mill bason, in addition to what it would cost to bring it that far; for the whole beach which is now employed as a landing place for the market boats, and which now affords a selection of the most convenient spots for landing every description of lumber, King's stores, &c. would be blocked up from these purposes, and entirely engrossed by the towing path. And it is

not on what is termed the beach alone these inconveniences would be felt; even the present port would be in a great measure condemned, for the towing path must extend along the beach opposite to the port. Suppose this done, and a loaded boat, either ascending or descending from the bason to the Cross—these boats are incapable of being propelled by sails, and should they pass in the outside of the port the river is too deep for setting poles—They are only constructed for being dragged; in passing the port it is therefore obvious that the vessels lying there must either sheer off so as to allow the boat to pass, or it must go on the outside of the vessels and suffer a serious delay, or otherwise the boat's cargo must be landed and carried past the port by carts.

By this famous saving plan (if adopted) it is therefore obvious that the navigation from Lachine to the foot of the current St. Mary could not be opened (which is the sole intention of the Lachine Canal) for less than the sum of 122,660*l*. And it will be observed in the above calculations that many items have been omitted; for instance, no account has been taken of the expence of transport from the port to the bason, nor of the sum required to form the towing path between these places, round Point Blondeau although it would be indispensably necessary from the encreased strength of the current were the river deepened there. Neither has the expences of building bridges been noticed although one would be required on the towing path at the place where the creek water runs into the river. From all which it is evident the sums here will be found below what would be the actual cost if put in practice according to this plan.

THE next part of the subject to be noticed is to ascertain the expence of making this Canal by the proper route, together with the advantages the public would reap from its passing in this direction, (*i. e.* to extend from Lachine to the foot of the Current through the town of Montreal,) a route which would embrace all the objects contemplated by this Canal—produce the greatest share of benefit to the public—and admit the greatest number of that public to participate in its advantages. First to excavate the main trunk from the Turnpike-gate to the foot of the Current St. Mary, a distance of about four miles and a half, at 2500*l.* per mile, 11,250*l.* For building 5 locks at 2000*l.* each, 10,000*l.* For erecting bridges and other extra expences, 5000*l.* In estimating the purchase of property, it is perhaps more difficult to come to a correct amount, but even here an estimate very near the truth may be formed. From the public spirit of some individuals, who would readily give up a part of their property for a public good, more particularly as the remainder would be increased in value, and from the small quantity of valuable property the Canal would touch, if carried in the proper direction, it is probable that the whole required to be purchased would not cost above 60,000*l.* These items altogether, amounting to 86,250*l.* form the expence of carrying the Canal by this route to the foot of the Current St. Mary, where it ought to disembogue, according to the plan adopted by Government, and agreeable to the opinions of every scientific man who has been consulted on the subject.

FROM this it will be seen, that even on the principle of saving expence, the sum of 36,410*l.* could be saved to the public by adopting this preferable route over what

they now propose; a circumstance which of itself (unattended with other advantages to be hereafter mentioned) should induce the Commissioners to decide on its extending to the Cross at once, if they have power to do so, and if not, it ought to influence our Legislature to grant them additional authority for that purpose.

BUT as all this dissention has been made about a lateral branch to extend to the Port, and as this could be obtained with superior advantages, even if the main trunk should extend to the Cross as has been already shown, and this lateral branch taken off at the proper part; it may not be improper to consider what would be the expence of such a branch, bason, &c. Then provided it should diverge from the trunk at the bridge at the foot of the St. Antoine-suburb and proceed directly to the Port as mentioned (page 19.) The excavating a branch this distance, say half a mile, 500*l*. (for it would not require to be so large as the main trunk). For excavating and forming a bason, 500*l*. For erecting three locks to bring the bason from the summit level of the Canal to that of the Port at 2000*l*. each—making in all 7000*l*. Here we have the branch and bason made agreeable to their wishes. The latter in a situation far better adapted for public convenience than if made at the Wind-mills, and if the expence of making this be deducted from the sum of 36,410*l*, there will still be a clear saving to the country of 29,410*l*., while at the same time the Canal will be carried in the proper direction, and so as to answer the purpose originally intended.

It will be observed that in calculating the expence of this lateral branch, no notice has been taken of what sum

might be required to purchase the property through which it would pass. But it ought to be remarked that in calculating the expence of that branch which would pass in at the Wind-mills nothing was charged for the property; and as the distance the former has to pass is shorter, and besides as it extends through little private property, the actual expence of purchasing would probably be equal in both cases; or perhaps less in this case than if it passed by the Wind-mill route.

A great deal has been said about this last route deserving the preference because it is shorter; but in reference to the ultimate destination of the Canal, namely; the foot of the Current or the Cross, the distance between it and the Turnpike-gate, or where they want the branch to break off, is perhaps not much altered whether going by the Wind-mills, the Port and along the river side, or if we proceed directly through the town parallel to the river. At all events, it cannot be denied that if the Canal was once in operation, the passing it through the town by loaded boats could be accomplished far easier, than if they had to go along by the towing-path from the Port to the Cross, and were subjected to the delays attendant on passing the Port, either by the vessels shifting, or by the unloading, carting and reimparking of their cargoes, &c. &c. as before mentioned. But in addition to all this; the saving to the public which could be attained by the one route in preference to the other has to be added; for it is obvious that whatever can be saved is a direct gain to the country. To enquire into this forms the next subject for our consideration.

It will be obvious to the most superficial observer that if the canal was continued down from Lachine to the Cross (or foot of the current) and a lateral branch taken off at the most convenient point to pass in at the port, the facility of intercourse between these three great points, namely, *Lachine*, the *Port*, and the *Cross* would be very much increased, and all the advantages attending this route enjoyed in a very eminent degree. In this case boats wishing to ascend from the Cross to the port could come up the canal until they reached the point where the lateral branch breaks off and from thence to the Port, at once, and *vice versa* in wishing to descend to the Cross. But in addition to this facility of intercourse between these different points, if basons or landing places were made on the canal in its passage through the town, the advantages the public would reap from this route over that by the Wind-mills would be of the utmost importance. It has been already stated that about 25,000 tons of merchandise are brought to Montreal every year, and that of this quantity not less than 10,000 tons would be discharged at the Cross. It has also been observed that a saving of 500*l.* per annum, could be made on this quantity if brought up from thence by the canal, instead of being dragged up by their towing path, even admitting that the making and preserving of it was practicable (page 25.) But the whole annual imports of Montreal which have been calculated at 25,000 tons a year, are at present, (and still would be if the canal should not descend through the town,) subjected to a heavy charge for cartage both from the port to the stores, and a considerable portion (supposed one half) liable to a second cartage when sent from the stores to those who purchase it for a distant

market. This, including the double cartage on the one half, cannot be estimated at less than 3s. per ton, giving a sum of 3750*l.* per annum, or a principal of 62,500*l.* all of which could be saved by the canal's going in the proper direction, and by having ware-houses and stores into which merchandise could be landed from the boats as they passed. It may be said that all this could be effected by following the other route as ware-houses might be built on their famous bason at the Wind-mills or on the towing path along the beach. To this it is answered that in the former situation, their distance from the town would be attended with very serious inconvenience without diminishing the expence of erecting them, and the plan of placing them on or near the towing path is totally impracticable as they would be liable to be swept away every year with the breaking up of the ice.

ONE of the great superiorities of a water carriage over that by land, and which has been the cause of its obtaining a preference wherever it could be obtained, is its greater safety and the diminished risk from breakage attending it; and the farther goods can go by the canal the less distance they will have of land carriage, and the less risk of loss in this way. The annual sum lost by breakage from land carriage on the importations to Montreal, or what is the same thing, the increased price the public must pay for the sound portion in consequence of this loss forms no inconsiderable item on the amount of articles liable to such casualties. Suppose for the sake of round numbers the yearly importations to Montreal of foreign goods amounts to 1,000,000*l.* and if the great portion of these articles which are liable to

damage, breakage and other casualties incident to land carriage be considered perhaps one-sixteenth per cent. may not be reckoned too much. This, on the whole sum of 1,000,000*l.* will give an annual loss of 625*l.* or a principal of 10,416*l.* at 6 per cent.

THE extension of the Canal to the Cross would ensure a facility and quick dispatch in delivering the cargoes of vessels coming from sea, which they could not enjoy at the same expence were it to go by any other route. Whenever this was known, vessels could be obtained to charter for Montreal at a much cheaper rate than could be done heretofore, because they would be exempted from the delay of waiting for a wind to bring them up the Current St. Mary. This would produce a reduction in freight of 2*s.* 6*d.* per ton, (surely a very moderate allowance) which sum on the whole 25,000 tons, would produce an annual saving of 3125*l.*, or the interest of 52,080*l.* These items, amounting to 124,990*l.*, saved to the public by carrying the Canal in this direction, have to be added to the actual saving of 29,410*l.* on the execution of the work, purchase of property, by the other route, making a clear gain of 154,400*l.* which might be effected by carrying the Canal directly through the town to the Cross, instead of its going by the Wind-mills, as now proposed: and all this could be accomplished without interfering with the present Port, and leaving the beach to be employed for its present uses.

It farther deserves to be mentioned that this saving not only operates on the consumers of goods in Montreal and in the lower Province, but is also influential on the sale of merchandise in Upper Canada, and while it les-

sens the actual expence to our merchants individually it confers a benefit on the community at large, and tends to improve the trade of the country. In proof of which it is only necessary to observe that the lower the merchant from Lower Canada can sell his goods, the better is he prepared to enter into competition with the trader from the United States who now comes into Upper Canada and undersells him to the injury of the trade of the country; and who will have a still better opportunity of doing so when their projected canals in the northern states are completed.

But in the foregoing calculations the advantageous saving which would accrue from this Canal's being properly made on the importation of foreign merchandise only has been noticed. Nothing has been said relating to the savings on importations from the upper country, whether for consumption here or for shipment: these have also to be taken into account.

On the article of Fire-wood alone no inconsiderable sum could be saved every year. Even if the beach were left open, as at present, the route by the Canal; if following a proper direction, would be so much cheaper, more expeditious, and so much less liable to loss, that there is little doubt it would be preferred, and a great portion of the cord-wood be brought by it into the centre of the town at once. But let it be supposed that only one half the quantity, 15,000 cords, should come that way every year, from the shorter distance it would have to be carted 1s. per cord might be saved, which is equal to 750l. per annum, or a capital of 12,500. Then as it is well known that about one-twelfth of the cord

wood is lost every year in coming down the Lachine rapids and by breaking loose from the beach, this portion of the 16,000 cords which came by the canal would be saved—estimating this at 12s. 6d. per cord, the lowest price it generally brings, gives a farther yearly saving of 781l. or a capital of 19,000l. Hence upon the article of cord wood alone 1531l. per annum, or 25,500l. might be saved to the public.

It is obvious that a similar amount of 1531l. or a capital of 25,500l. would also be saved by this means upon lumber of all kinds which is used in Montreal and its vicinity, it being liable to similar charges for cartage and to similar risks of being lost in the rapids. But this is not all, upon flour, pot-ash, wheat, and every other article which descends from the country above by the river, a saving could be made if this canal were once properly completed. The amount of these things has been ascertained to be about 14,000 tons every year, and let it be supposed that only one half, 7000 tons, of them would descend by the canal. As matters now stand, and as it would still be should the canal be taken in at the Wind-mill, or not extend through the centre of the town, there is about 2s. per ton paid for cartage from the port to the stores, equal to 700l. a year, or a principal of 11,660l. Whereas it is obvious, could these things be sent by the main trunk of the canal to the Cross, or were the lateral branch to the port so taken off that they could be sent thither for shipment by it, all this and a farther saving might be made.

In this manner it is evident that upon the importations from the country above, or on what may be termed the

home trade, a farther saving of 62,660*l.* may be made by giving this canal its proper direction and extent, which when added to the sum of 124,990*l.* which it has before been shown could be saved by the importation of foreign merchandise together with the sum of 29,410*l.* being the difference of expence between carrying the canal to the Cross direct and the Wind-mill route gives a total of 215,060. And it is equally obvious that nothing more than properly accomplishing this work in the way and direction formerly pointed out and before approved of, is required to effect this object; and at the same time it can not be attained by any other method, for no other change in the direction of this canal, nor any abridgment of its extent will produce the above advantages, or attain the primary object for which it was originally undertaken.

THE comparative advantages, and expences attending the two routes will be seen from the following statement, made agreeable to the foregoing calculations.

FIRST.

The expence of taking the branch of the Canal from the main trunk, nearly opposite the Turnpike-gate, to join the River at the Wind-mills, and to remove the impediments in the navigation from thence to the foot of the Current.

To cutting from the main trunk, to the Wind-mills,	L. 3,000
→ making the Basin and Wharf,	5,000
→ do. extra large Locks,	12,000
→ deepening the River from the Locks to the Port,	8,000
→ keeping the same in repair, pr.	2,500
	<hr/>
	L. 24,500

To deepening the River below the Port,	5,000
→ making a Towing-path,	1,500
→ keeping it in repair,	8,350
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	L. 14,850

To extra expence on Fire-wood, for Cartage and loss, &c. &c.	37,500
→ do. do. on different kinds of Lumber,	37,500
→ Extra expence of transporting 10,000 tons from the Cross yearly,	8,350
	<hr/>
	L. 83,350

L. 122,660

SECOND.

The expence of continuing the main trunk of the Rochelle Canal to the foot of the Current St. Mary, and of taking a lateral branch from it to diverge from the

trunk near to St. Antoine bridge, to join the River at the Port, with a Bason on said branch, &c.

To excavating the main trunk from near the Turnpike-gate to the foot of the Current,	11,250
— building Locks,	10,000
— ditto Bridges and other extra expences,	5,000
— The price of property on the line,	60,000
	<hr/>
	L.86,250

To cutting a branch from the main trunk to the Port,	500
— forming a Bason on do.	500
— Building Locks,	6000
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	L.7,000
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	L.93,250

Balance, as appears above, in favour of bringing the Canal to the foot of the Current at once, and carrying a lateral branch to the Port in the direction above mentioned, . . . L.29,410

To saving on transport of 10,000 tons from the Cross (annually),	8,890
— do, do. on cartage of imports,	62,500
— do. on breakage,	10,416
— do. on freight from Europe,	52,080
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	L.133,826

To ditto on Cord-wood,	12,500
— ditto do. lost,	13,000
— do. on Lumber of all kinds,	25,500
— do. on Cartage of Produce,	11,660
	<hr/>
	L.62,660

L.225,306

From all this it may be clearly seen, that by carrying this Canal on in the proper and originally intended line, instead of the deviation now petitioned for, or any other route, a decided saving of 225,396*l.* could be made to the public. And in the above statement only the difference of expence between the routes and a few, very few of the advantages attendant on its extension to the Cross have been taken into account—were they all added, perhaps it is not exaggerating to say, the saving and advantages would be more than treble this amount. But taking the above sum as it now stands, there would be an annual saving of 14,000*l.*; equal to 14 per cent. on the whole capital required to complete this Canal in the manner most conducive to the public advantage.

ALTHOUGH in the foregoing calculations nothing has been said respecting the superior revenue which could be drawn from the Canal by continuing it to the Cross, one part is so obvious as to merit some attention. By following this line a supply of water could be obtained from it to drive every description of hydraulic machinery; and when it is considered that these could be constructed as not to be liable to be stopped by the frost at any season of the year, from this combined with the advantages of their situation they would be eagerly sought after. It is perhaps not too much to say that the profits from this alone would pay the interest of the sum required to extend the Canal through the town.

In all the foregoing calculations only the difference between the present state of Affairs when there is no Canal, and what would be the case if extended only to the Port or foot of the Current have been taken into consideration; should it join the river above the Port or at any point higher than the foot of the Current, these savings and advantages would not only be proportionably

lessened, but the community subjected to pay an additional price for many articles above what they now cost. Let a cord of fire-wood be taken as an example: we have already seen that it costs for cartage 1s. 6d. more to bring it from their famous Wind-mill bason, than it would cost to bring it from the beach. But were it brought by the Canal to the centre of the town it could then be carted to the doors of the consumers still 1s. per cord cheaper, thereby making the difference of 2s. 6d. per cord, on what it would cost at the said bason. This sum on the cartage of half the quantity brought every year, say on 15000 cords, amounts to 1875l. or a capital of 81,250l., and there is little doubt but the allowance of one-half is here too small, for were the Canal completed much more than that quantity would come down by it.

In conclusion, let it be remembered that this is a work from which the public are anxiously expecting great benefits, and that if properly performed it is eminently calculated to realise those expectations. The Commissioners entrusted with its execution, are by the act which constitutes them, invested with extensive powers on some points, and on others they are perhaps circumscribed within what they ought to be. But still, by keeping strictly within the provisions of that act, they have it in their power to perform the work in a way which would ensure a large share of the advantages which are expected from it; and as it progresses, and when a more intimate acquaintance with the subject shall have furnished them with opportunities for reflecting upon it, it is to be hoped wherever that authority is cramped by the present act, or where they deem themselves incompetent under its provisions to make any change which they see would be for the public good,

they will not hesitate by a respectful application to the Legislature to seek for more ample powers. It is a duty no less incumbent on them to use their best exertions in accelerating the work. This will lessen the expence. At present labour and property is low, and this ought to be taken advantage of. Some of those connected with it, have annual salaries for their services which will of course cease when the work is done. But in addition to this, the Lachine Canal may justly be considered as the first great work wherein the public are all interested which was ever undertaken in Canada; and if an example be shown of the facility and expedition with which public improvements can be made, it will operate as a stimulus to proceed with others where necessary.

LET them banish from their minds this baneful economising plan, which (if carried to excess) never fails to make a bad and useless job. Let them go onsteadily, regardless of private interest or party views. By doing so they will effectually accomplish a work to Canada the most important that ever was undertaken, and leave to posterity a lasting monument of their sound judgment, patriotic zeal, and indefatigable perseverance for the public good*.

* If they require the force of example to direct them in this occasion, let them turn their attention to the magnificent public works which have been erected in other countries—for instance, the Wapping, East and West India Docks in London, similar works in Liverpool, Bristol, Hull, Leith, &c. as well as the numerous and extensive Canals in Great-Britain, or in the neighbouring state, where 200 miles of canal has been cut in three years; and let them compare the well-earned honour those entrusted with the erection of these, and that which is acquired by *saving* the public money, appropriated for *public buildings, internal communications, &c.* in Canada. The difference in the magnitude of the undertakings does not affect the principle derived from this comparison; for those incapable of properly directing the expenditure of £50,000 are far less able to do so if the sum be greater.

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