

## R E P O R T .

THE Select Committee appointed to examine into the prices paid and the methods adopted for the transit of Products on the different Communications within this Province—and to whom was referred the Message of His Excellency the Governor General in answer to the Address of the House, of the 14th July, 1841, on the subject of an Address of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada relating to the introduction of the Products of the Province into the Ports of Great Britain, free of any Duty—with an Instruction to take into consideration all matters relating to the Agriculture and Commerce of this Province, and with power to report from time to time—have the honor to Report :—

That from an examination of different individuals engaged in Trade, Commerce and Forwarding within this Province, (Appendix A.) as well from information received from various persons in the adjoining Country, they find the relative prices of transportation between given points as stated in Table B. Appendix.

It appears that the cost of transporting a ton of merchandize (of 2240 lbs.) from Montreal to Kingston, a distance of 250 miles, was, in 1838, 1839 and 1840, £3 2 6	
Of which the toll is,	0 9 3
Leaving to the Forwarder,	2 13 3
Being 4 cents 2 6-10 mills per ton, per mile.	
For the same distance on the Erie Canal, the cost per ton of 2240 lbs. is,	£2 4 4
Deduct for toll,	1 6 3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Leaving the Forwarder	0 18 0 $\frac{1}{2}$
Being 1 cent 4 4-10 mills per ton, per mile.	
Shewing an excess on the Rideau over the Erie, of	£1 15 2 $\frac{1}{2}$

Your Committee attribute one of the principal causes of the continued high prices of transportation on the Rideau, to the absence of any towing-path or steam power under the control of those who have charge of the work, to convey all vessels or craft through this communication.

This steam power is in the possession of private Companies, which places the Canal as completely under their control, as if a Company constructed a Rail Road and placed the locomotive or propelling power under the control of a separate Company, with separate interests.

It appears from the evidence before Your Committee, that seven tug boats would form a daily line between Kingston and Lachine, which may be furnished at an outlay of £1,500 to £3,000 per boat.—(Appendix C.)

The amount of Merchandize passing up through the Lachine Canal, in 1840, was about 17,000 tons,  
And Produce downwards, about 654,870 bbls.  
(Appendix D.)

Supposing the freight should be lessened, descending, 1s. per barrel,	£32,743 10 0
Ascending, £1 per ton,	17,000 0 0

Amounting to £49,743 10 0

which would effect a saving to the Country in one year, far exceeding the proposed outlay.

The annexed letter from S. Jones, Esq., (marked I.) and the Petition of sundry Forwarders on the River St. Lawrence referred to Your Committee, shew the necessity of removing the obstructions complained of by a Committee of the House of Assembly of the late Province of Upper Canada, in their Report dated 22d April, 1839; Your Committee, therefore, in order to ensure the free and profitable use of the Ottawa and Rideau Communication, beg to call the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the expediency of immediately widening the Grenville Canal, on which, in a distance of three miles, there are three small Locks of only half the width of those on the Rideau,—thus offering, when the St. Anne's Lock shall have been completed, now in course of construction, an uninterrupted line of communication from Lachine to Kingston, at present, from the obstruction caused by those three Locks, impracticable for the use of large craft and steamers of a suitable size for towing; the same cause has hitherto formed a prominent barrier to a realization of the benefits contemplated from the construction of the Rideau Canal and other improvements on the Ottawa River.

Your Committee would also beg leave to recommend to Her Majesty's Government, to authorize the Board of Works to remove the arched Bridges on the Lachine Canal, and procure and place seven tug steamboats on this communication, to ply between Kingston and Lachine, by 1st May next, so as to tow all barges or craft which may offer, in their regular turn, in order to open full competition to the public; charging a sufficient toll on all transit downwards and upwards to defray the expenses and repay the construction of those boats.

The attention of the Board of Works is particularly directed to provide every facility for the passage of boats at the Ste. Anne's Rapids, without any additional expense beyond the actual cost of towing.

The Union of the Provinces renders the obligation to call at the Côteau du Lac, if such heretofore existed (whether sanctioned by law or usage) unnecessary;—a vessel clearing from Niagara to Prescott, with a cargo, might with equal propriety be compelled to call at Kingston, or any other intermediate Port. The defective system as regards Pilotage from Côteau du Lac downwards on the St. Lawrence is the cause of much delay and imposition to the trade. Although these alterations, if finished by the opening of the navigation the ensuing year, will tend materially to lessen the price of transportation, and enable the grower and consumer to realize the advantages originally contemplated by this work, yet Your Committee cannot but feel the importance of opening the great leading water communication to the Ocean, and enabling the Inhabitants of this Province to avail themselves of all the advantages which nature has placed at their disposal. The magnitude and increase of the extensive Country on and above Lake Erie may be inferred from the efforts heretofore made, and still continued, by the adjoining States, to direct it to the Atlantic through their respective Ports.

The great rival communications for this extensive trade, are the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence. From the high rate of transit and tolls on the Ohio, Indiana and Illinois Canals, which now do and hereafter will connect those great waters (Appendix E.), it is evident that the Country bordering on the tributary streams leading thereto, will be the dividing line,—consequently the only competition with which we have to contend is the Erie Canal, for the enlargement of which the State of New York are expending many millions,—and the Commissioners anticipate a reduction on the price of transportation, of one half, which leads to a comparison of the natural advantages of the two routes, which will be seen in Appendix F. & G.

If the expense of transportation on our Lakes and Rivers were equal to the expense of transportation on a Canal, the gain in favor of the St. Lawrence would be

17s. 2d. per ton, upwards, and 9½d. per barrel of Flour, downwards; but if we reduc<sup>e</sup> the cost of transportation to the actual prices paid on the Mississippi, we gain £1 1s. 4½d. per ton, upwards, and 1s. 3½d. per barrel, downwards. (Appendix H.)

Your Committee do not anticipate so great a reduction, although they entertain no doubt, that the natural advantages possessed by this communication, will always enable it to compete with success against any other.

On reference to a Report of the House of Assembly of the late Province of Upper Canada, as early as 1832, the expense of transporting a ton of iron or salt, after the completion of the St. Lawrence Canal, is estimated at £2 10s. per ton; the evidence attached to that Report, shews that a diminution in the prices of transporting Timber through that Canal would also be attained.

The information derived from a letter of Alfred Barrett, Esquire, Principal Engineer on the Erie Canal, dated 20th July last, and from the evidence of John Calvin, Esquire, of the firm of Calvin, Cook and Counter, confirms that opinion, and shews that every article of Lumber descending the St. Lawrence, would pass through this Canal at a much less expense than by descending the Rapids. (see Appendix G.)

The St. Lawrence Canal from Dickinson's Landing to the Côteau du Lac, can be finished for about £50,000,—a Canal of only a few miles in length will connect this point with the Lachine, from whence we are connected with tide-water by the Lachine Canal.

Your Committee have every confidence that the Revenue of this Canal will amply repay the cost of its construction; and feel a hope that no further delay will be incurred in its immediate commencement.

All which is respectfully submitted.

(Signed,)

WM. HAMILTON MERRITT, Chairman.  
J. NEILSON,  
I. BUCHANAN,  
D. BURNET,  
A. N. MORIN,  
A. C. TASCHEREAU,  
JOHN P. ROBLIN,  
MALCOLM CAMERON,  
JOHN PRINCE,  
D. THOMPSON,  
HAMILTON H. KILLALY,  
J. W. DUNSCOMB,  
I. W. POWELL.

26th August, 1841.

Reports of the  
Relative Expenses  
of the  
Importation of  
Merchandise &  
Country Produce