

from it as the Agriculturist himself. Our reasons for entertaining this opinion we shall state briefly. First, in proposition as we augment the traffic upon our canals, it will be in our power to reduce the rate of the tolls levied upon them, and every saving of this kind is a direct bonus to the Agriculturist, for every penny he saves in the cost of transporting his produce to market is a direct and positive increase in his profits. This is benefit the first. Again, by augmenting the amount of produce to be carried, the attention of capitalists is more and more attracted to the carrying business; and, as a necessary consequence, great competition ensues in it, the lowest remunerative rates are established, and agricultural profits are again enhanced positively and directly by this reduction in the cost of transportation, consequent on increased traffic. This is benefit the second. But the reduction of inland rates of freight is not the only advantage to be looked for from increased trade. An equal benefit may reasonably be expected from a proportionate reduction in the rate of sea-going freight. By making Montreal or Quebec the great depots of the Western trade, vessels will be attracted to them in great numbers, because they will be able to depend on finding cargoes at some rate of freight or other.

Thus great competition will be insured, and the inevitable result will be that a low average rate of sea-going freight will be established; and in proportion as freight is reduced, average prices are enhanced to the Agricultural producer. But it is not only on outward freight that the Agriculturist is to be benefited; he will also gain by the diminished cost of imported goods, such as sugars, teas, wearing apparel, and such like; for it is quite clear that if the St. Lawrence can be made the cheapest downward route for the products of the West, it will also prove the cheapest route for conveying supplies upwards to the West for the local consumption of the inhabitants. Hence a much greater saving in the cost of the transportation of goods will be effected, than would at first sight be supposed; because as the vessels employed in the trade, both inland and seagoing, will have cargoes both ways, it follows that the freight, either upward or downward, will be little more than half what it would be if the vessels had cargoes to carry only one way. In other words, the plain inference from the foregoing is, that by removing all restrictions from our commerce in American produce, we enhance the price of grain to the Canadian farmer, while at the same time we enable him to purchase his wearing apparel, his farming implements, and the foreign or imported articles he requires for his table, at greatly reduced rates—advantages which must be apparent to all, and which must inevitably result from abandoning the restrictive or protective system.

But there is a yet more important view to be taken of this latter saving. The reduced prices of imported goods adverted to above is the result simply of the diminished cost of transportation.

There is another element in the cost of imported articles of much more importance which Free Trade will effectually get rid of, viz.,—the enhanced cost caused by differential duties!

The Agriculturist of Canada is obviously not aware of the origin and effects of the duties here referred to; otherwise he would not now sit so tamely and quietly under them. He is obviously not aware that these duties were imposed on the colony as an equivalent to the manufacturers of the mother country, for the preference extended to Canadian produce in the markets of the latter; a preference which Sir Robert Peel's new commercial policy reduces to a rate hardly worth speaking of, and which is to disappear entirely at the end of three years. He is obviously not aware that these duties compel him to pay upwards of £250,000 annually for the articles that enter most largely into his consumption, over what they would cost him if he were allowed to purchase in the cheapest market, viz., £105,000 in the shape of extra duties, and the balance, moderately estimated at £145,000, in the shape of extra price! We affirm again, that in our opinion, the Canadian Agriculturist cannot be aware of the existence of these imposts and their oppressive effects; or, if he is, that the tameness with which he sits under them is to us incomprehensible.

There is yet another view, however, by which we can show the Agriculturist, as well as every other individual in the colony, that Free Trade is for his benefit, and for the benefit of all. We have already shown that it will enhance the prices of exportable produce, and at the same time diminish the cost of imported goods. We shall now show that it will diminish taxation; and in the same ratio increase every man's income.

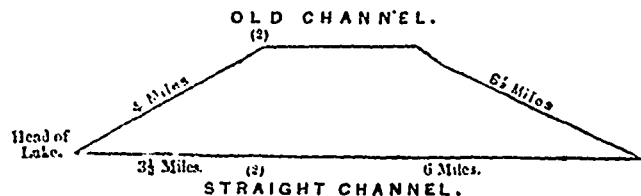
The Government requires a revenue of about £520,000 to meet the annual expenditure. Of this sum, there is at present £34,000 only raised by tolls upon our canals. But by throwing them open to the use of the Americans, or, in other words, by allowing the free importation of American produce through them, the tolls to be derived from them would at a moderate estimate reach fully £200,000 instead of £34,000, thereby putting it in the power of Government either to remit taxes to the extent of £166,000 per annum, or, on the other hand, giving it the power of laying out that additional sum of money every year in constructing roads, or endowing schools, or anything else that might appear equally calculated to promote the general welfare of the colony; and in either case it must be obvious that every man's income would thereby be substantially increased.

Can it be supposed then that the country, particularly the Agri-

cultural class which is its bone and sinew, after it has had time to reflect upon these facts, will hesitate as to the course which it ought to pursue? Will it still hesitate between Free Trade, light taxation, and consequent prosperity, on the one hand—and increased taxation, stunted commerce, and declining wealth, on the other? We trust it will not. We trust the Agriculturist in particular will soon see that he has a direct interest in urging the immediate adoption by this colony of local Free Trade; for by it alone can he hope to enhance the value of the produce of his soil and labour, and at the same time ensure to himself the benefit of greatly reduced taxation.

### LAKE ST. PETER.

A short time only can now elapse before our improved internal navigation will be completed. About July in 1847, steamers of a large size from Lake Ontario, propellers and other vessels from the Canadian shore on Lake Erie, and from Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois, of a size fit to pass through the Welland Canal, will be seen in our port. We will suppose that the commercial policy of the Province will not be of that character to prevent vessels from the United States coming here. Now, as the vessels from Lakes Ontario and Erie will be of the largest possible size, from the fact that the price of freight will be in proportion to the tonnage, and as the smallest of these coming through the Welland Canal will carry from 3000 to 3500 barrels of flour, the question may reasonably be asked, Will vessels with such large cargoes stop at Montreal, or will they not proceed at once to Quebec? We have before stated that the Free Trade Association repudiate all sectional interest. We wish that point to be the depot of our exports and imports where the trade of the country can be done cheapest. Let the farmer, manufacturer, and mechanic, use their utmost economy and skill in producing their various articles of industry, and while this is the case, it is no less the duty of the inhabitants and merchants of this city to develop the resources of its natural position, and try to make it in future, what it has hitherto been, the great commercial mart of Canada, provided this can be done to the advantage of the people generally. Hitherto, during the summer months, when the water on the shallow part of Lake St. Peter is only 11 feet, ships from sea have had to tranship part of their cargoes, at an enormous expense, to Montreal, below which port the small craft hitherto used on our Canals, carrying only from 500 to 1100 barrels flour, were not adapted to navigate. Very soon, however, the case will be different, and unless Lake St. Peter is deepened, the trade of the country can be cheaper done in Quebec than here. But Lake St. Peter can be deepened; and the only difference in opinion is, as to the proper means of doing so,—one party insisting that the natural channel, which is crooked, is the best, while the Board of Works differ from these, and have been engaged for some two years in making a straight channel. The following figure is a near representation of the two channels referred to:



From the Head of the Lake to No. 2 in the New Channel, the dredging machines have been at work ever since the work was begun, and in the course of three or four months will have completed a channel 150 feet wide, by 14 feet deep in low water. From the Head of the Lake to No. 2 in the Old Channel, there is a depth of 18 to 20 feet in low water, and a channel of 1500 feet wide,—with the exception of a bar of 150 feet, on which there are 11 feet water, which can be dredged in a few days. From No. 2 in the Old Channel, and in the New, the depth of water is alike, and it will cost the same to deepen the one as the other.

We have occasion to know that the dredging machines under the superintendence of Captain Vaughan are in perfect order, and with the scows and tow-boats discharge in good weather the astonishing quantity of 2320 cubic yards of mud or clay per day. Now as there are only two and a half feet of clay to remove for four miles, and one foot for two miles, on either channel from No. 2, it will only require 156 working days to make a channel of 14 feet through the Lake; that is, supposing the dredging immediately to be begun in the Old Channel; for, as we said before, it will take some three or four months to finish the three and a half miles in the New Channel to 150 feet wide. We should have no objection to the straight channel; but as some £23,000 have been already spent on mere labour, besides £38,000 on machinery and boats, and as most of our practical men admit that in consequence of the shallowness of the water on either side of the three and a half miles, it will be necessary for this distance to have it at least 600 feet wide, instead of 150 feet, we say at once that £92,000 is too much to spend to obtain a straight channel, and is unnecessary from the fact that in the same place we have a natural channel of 1500 feet wide, a little crooked certainly, but not difficult to navigate, as is proved by the fact that ships in tow of steamers have frequently come through in dark nights.