

Deviation of the Navigable Channel between the Harbour and Victoria Bridge.

The new channel which is proposed in compensation for closing the present one, would pass round the south-east side of St. Helen's and Ile Ronde, and enter the Harbour at Hochelaga. It would, according to the bill, be not less than 300 feet wide and 16 feet deep at low water, and its greatest current as estimated by Mr. Bateman, would not be over 7 miles an hour. It is intended too, that passengers may be landed from the Laprairie and other boats on the up stream side of the embankment.

The breadth and depth of the proposed new channel east of St. Helen's, appear to me to be sufficient for the requirements of navigation, and although I am at a loss to see how its current, under the conditions sketched out in the bill, would not considerably exceed 7 miles an hour. I have no doubt that it could easily be so arranged as to have speeds not exceeding some of those in the present current. Its chief disadvantage is obviously its circuitous course: it would add $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to every trip to and from the upper part of the harbour, with the additional disadvantage that there would either be the Current St. Mary, or that in the new channel to be ascended every trip; while now there is a current only one way. Practically, it would amount to about 20 minutes extra running in each down trip, and 30 minutes in each up trip of a boat capable of making 12 miles an hour in still water. Beyond the extra running of boats, and loss of time to their passengers, I see no important objection to the proposed deviation of the channel.

For rafts, the St. Lambert Channel would be equally as good as the present Main Channel and it would be a benefit of some importance to have them prevented from passing through the harbour.

The plans show a clear headway under the proposed bridge of only about 48 feet, which is 12 feet less than that under the Victoria Bridge, and this is, I think, an objectionable feature in the Scheme.

Although not strictly within the scope of my instructions, it may not be out of place to draw attention to the fact that the wharfage proposed in the Scheme, would be within the boundaries of the Montreal Harbour. The bill, as I understand it, would confer upon the Company independent powers to act as wharfingers at their own wharves, and there might thus be established within the Harbour a system of wharfage, which to say the least, might be very embarrassing to the Harbour Commissioners in carrying out their Public Trust.

Yours respectfully,

JOHN KENNEDY.

Chief Engineer.