

most excellent mariner, and a man of prudence and integrity. I have the utmost confidence in any statement he may make.

JOHN SIMSON.

Sworn before me this 7th day of }
April, 1857, }

S. WAKEMAN, *Chairman of the Com. of Com. and Navigation.*

Silas S. Packard being duly sworn, deposes and says: I am a resident of the city of Albany; by occupation superintendent of Bryant & Stratton's mercantile college. I formerly lived for more than three years in the village of Tonawanda, Erie county, New-York; removed there on the first of April, 1853, and remained until the first of August, 1856; had charge for the greater portion of that period, of the books of the Tonawanda Commercial Co.; also published a weekly newspaper, known as the Niagara River Pilot, in both of which capacities it was a part of my duty to take cognizance of the commercial business of the village, and its facilities as a port. I believe it to be an acknowledged and uncontroverted fact, that there is no harbor on the whole line of lakes possessing more natural commercial advantages than the harbor of Tonawanda; the facilities for the transshipment of property from the river to the Erie canal, and from the canal to the river, are of a superior kind. From the mouth of the Tonawanda creek to the Buffalo and Niagara Falls railroad bridge, a fine harbor is afforded for unloading timber, lumber and staves, a large and increasing business in which has been going forward for years. Messrs. Hosmer & Townsend have here a stave-dressing factory, capable of doing an immense business, which is dependent upon the free navigation of the Niagara river. Here, also, during the season; an extensive business in rafting is done, there being a lock communicating with the Erie canal. Below this point, upon the Niagara river there has been erected, during the past year, a most extensive distillery for the manufacture of high-wines, with elevator attached capable of doing a large business, all of which is dependent upon the unobstructed navigation of the river. At the mouth of the creek, also, a large steam flouring mill has been erected within the past two years, by the Messrs. Sweeney, capable of manufacturing daily one hundred barrels of flour. This mill is also to the greatest extent dependent upon western supplies of grain, and would be injuriously affected by any obstruction to the navigation of the river.

Upon the Tonawanda and Elicott creeks in the village of Tonawanda, there are also four large steam saw-mills, all of which