

REPORT
OF THE
CHIEF ENGINEER OF PUBLIC WORKS,
ON THE ENLARGEMENT OF
THE WELLAND CANAL.

OTTAWA, 29th April 1872.

THE SECRETARY OF PUBLIC WORKS :

SIR,—On receiving your letter, No. 7961, (dated August 17th, 1870), relative to the contemplated enlargement of the Welland Canal, I at once took steps to have proper instrumental surveys made of the various lines and localities that presented anything like a favorable appearance, or had been suggested as suitable for that purpose; and of having such data collected, as would enable the whole matter to be fully and clearly laid before the Department.

These surveys and examinations extended over a large area of country, and in some cases had to be of a minute nature, consequently they occupied a considerable length of time. Plans, profiles, &c., of the several lines being, however, now prepared, I have the honor to submit for consideration the following report on the subject:—

The Agricultural resources of the vast region lying contiguous to the western lakes of this Continent, are doubtless without a parallel as regards extent; and the rapidity with which they have been developed, is wholly unprecedented.

In 1825 the completion of the Erie Canal, first opened up a practicable route for western immigrants; but it was not until about 15 years later that the interior regions were brought so far under cultivation as to permit of the export of surplus produce to any considerable extent. Since that time, however, the growth of trade has been such, that the receipts of grain alone, of all kinds, in 1871, at the five different receiving ports on the lakes, amounted to over *one hundred and forty millions of bushels*.

This of itself is a formidable mass to transport; but it is greatly augmented by other agricultural products—immense quantities of lumber and timber from the forests on the shores of Lakes Huron and Michigan, and minerals from Lake Superior; all of which form a volume of trade that now presses upon every available avenue of communication,