

its range, and would ultimately lead to much good, and, in the mean time, though I could not help lamenting that our Rulers should have allowed the credit of the construction of the Sault-St. Marie Canal to pass into the hands of our American neighbours, I also felt justly proud of the many signal improvements either already accomplished or now in progress in the navigation of our magnificent inland waters.

While thus reflecting, I had more than once struck a chord in unison with my own feelings, and called up, with mingled sensations of pride and mortification, the recollections of long by-gone times when I had,—in vain,—been the zealous though humble advocate of various local improvements connected with the remote quarter of the Province in which I had for 10 years been a resident, and of which many disjointed memoranda have ever since remained idle in my possession.

Having ventured on so querulous a prefatory remark, it may be as well to state at once, even at the risk of being deemed egotistic, as the most natural though rather narrative introduction to the subject of this paper, that having about 19 years ago been led to emigrate with my family to Canada, and to settle in the Western District, as best suited to a constitution long accustomed to the warm climate of India, it so happened that I was in a short time placed in prominent positions that afforded me favourable opportunities for acquiring information and judging of the capabilities of the surrounding country,* which soon enabled me to perceive that the remote quarter of the Province which I had selected as my home, was “a land of great promise,” both in a commercial and agricultural point of view, but more especially the latter, as being from soil and climate pre-eminently entitled to rank as the garden and granary of Canada, though, in its then neglected and mismanaged state, not soon likely to assume that prominent distinction.

I may further add that in the course of a hasty tour of observation through the Province during the previous year, I had visited Chatham by land from the London District, and and from thence travelled along the alternate marshy and sandy border of Lake St. Clair to Sandwich; from whence I made a detour by water up the river St. Clair to Port Sarنيا, and back to Sandwich and Amherstburgh; and from thence by land, through the Lake-shore townships, as far as St. Thomas, by which I had good opportunities of noticing both the physical structure and actual state of that line of country.

Thus prepared—and feeling, as every true patriot possessing any local influence ought to do, under similar circumstances—it was not long before I resolved to endeavour to throw into the scale whatever weight might be in my power; and I accordingly ventured to take rather a leading part in various local good works, such as founding an Agricultural, an Emigration, and even a Literary Society, as well as advocating the advancement of popular education. In the course of these sometimes expensive “labours of love,” I very soon saw the necessity of some extra stimulus being given to mercantile enterprise,—with so inviting a highway as our magnificent inland waters at our command; at the same time that I felt persuaded that without some direct encouragement from Government in the establishing of a few village harbours—were it only of *refuge*,—along the coast of Lake Erie, little could be accomplished by individuals; and I was therefore induced to make a commencing effort in *both* directions by prevailing on my fellow townsmen of Colchester to petition Government for the establishment of, at least, *one* village and

small harbour, on a “Reserve,” within a mile of my own property;—a project in which I at last succeeded, after several years of *official* delay. The objects aimed at will be best understood from the following extract from the Memorial alluded to. “Your Memorialists would respectfully draw the attention of Your Excellency to the remarkable fact, that while numerous ports and harbours have been long established along the opposite American Coast, the (more exposed) *Canadian* shore is still without a single port for Refuge of any kind from Amherstburgh to Port Stanley—a distance not less than 130 miles,—and that it has been justly remarked that until there shall be harbours of some kind at which Vessels can touch, neither sailing craft nor steamers can be expected to frequent our coast, far less be *built*, for the purpose of carrying on any thing like *coasting trade*, on the Canadian side of the Lake.”

The bearing of the foregoing quotation may not at first be apparent, but will be readily understood when it is added that by having in the first instance devoted my attention to the outline of the Coast, along Colchester, in connection with the prevailing winds and frequent storms on Lake Erie, on the bank of which my own property lay; coupled with a rather laborious examination of a marshy tract lying beyond a gravelly ridge a short distance inland, I was thereby insensibly led to extend my thoughts to devising some inexpensive mode of *general* drainage. My first efforts however were directed to the more limited scheme, above alluded to, for reclaiming about 6,000 acres of valuable marsh land in my own Township, in connection with the Village since established in it; and I then extended my inquiries as to the feasibility of introducing the same system into other Lake-shore Townships, and thereby effecting the redemption of perhaps a million of fertile acres, besides favouring the establishment of several much wanted harbours of refuge, and more especially of a very desirable one at the mouth of “Two Creeks,” in the Township of Romney which I had long had at heart, and the merits of which are now to form the chief burthen of this Paper.*

But though I had thus acquired much useful and even valuable information, my disjointed memoranda on the subject would perhaps have remained unacted upon, but for my having in 1845 been agreeably roused by learning that the Municipal Council of the District had petitioned Government for a preliminary survey, in behalf of one of the very objects which I had so long in view,—namely, the establishment of a harbour at the mouth of Two Creeks, but unfortunately, it appeared, without furnishing any documents or arguments demonstrative of its feasibility. Finding such to be the case, I lost no time in addressing a long official letter to Mr. Secretary Higginson in support of the Council’s Petition, in which I endeavoured to supply such information as I deemed desirable.†

The nature of the reply vouchsafed by the Government to the very reasonable appeal of the Municipal Council I know not. With regard to my own efforts it will for the present be sufficient to premise that though my letter was very flatteringly acknowledged by the Governor-General, on its being referred to the Commissioner of public works for his opinion, and “weighed in the balances” opposed to the great “*Rondeau*” *NUBBLE*, “was found wanting” and, as such doomed to

* See the prefixed map, or any good map of the Western District.

† Though savouring somewhat of egotism, it is but justice to note, that having been personally known to the Governor-General in India, I had been condescendingly honoured with an invitation to submit to him at any time whatever suggestions I might think would be beneficial to my adopted Country.

* First as Sheriff, and afterwards as Magistrate and Chairman of the Quarter Sessions.