

SAINT JOHN RIVER.

The expenditure during the past year for the improvement of the Navigation of this River, has been small compared with that of former years, and the outlay, amounting to £217, has been confined principally to that part of the River between Fredericton and Woodstock. These operations have been mainly directed to the improvement of the Towing Path on the margin of the River, for the use of the horse-boats. Advantage was taken of the low water to remove the boulders and blast away the projecting rocks, from the path round various points in the neighbourhood of the Meductic Falls. The operations extended round most of the worst places from Green's Point, below the Nackawickac River, to the Governor's Table Rock, above the upper pitch of the Falls. At Green's Point, a sufficient Path has been made over 150 rods in length. At Ingraham's Point, where the water runs very rapidly, the rocks and boulders were removed, and the old one-horse path widened out and improved, to admit two horses abreast; and at the Governor's Table a ledge was blasted away, and boulders removed, to form a passable Towing Path. Besides these very important alterations for the safety of the horses employed in towing, some improvements were made in the Path at Betts' Rapids, below Woodstock, and at other intermediate points on the River.

The Meductic Falls is still the great obstacle to the navigation both to Steam and Tow Boats, and it is desirable for the ensuing season, that a sum should be expended at this place, partly in further improvements to the Towing Path, and partly for the removal of some rocks in the Steam Boat channel, for which a Grant of £200 would be necessary. It is also desirable that further improvements should be made in the Towing Path at several points between Woodstock and the Grand Falls, for which purpose £100 should be appropriated.

SOUTH WEST MIRAMICHI.

Mr. Robert Swim, the former Commissioner, was appointed to take charge of the improvements on this River, and to prosecute the works left unfinished in 1855. For this purpose operations were commenced on the 20th of July, in removing some rocks and ledges where holes had been previously drilled, and the blasting of which, and removal of the fragments by grapnels, was completed. Working upwards, most of the Bars were improved, in some places by blasting, in others by the plough and scraper; and during the interruption occasioned by two Freshets, one about the middle of August, and the other on the 1st of September, the party were employed on the Towing Path. The whole expenditure for the season has been £276: and though considerable work still remains to complete the Bars, yet that section of the River below Doak's Bridge has, during the two seasons, had every important Bar more or less improved.

HORSE SHOE BAR, MIRAMICHI BAY.

In February, 1856, a petition was presented to the House of Assembly, and subsequently referred to the Board of Works, from the Justices of the Peace of Northumberland, praying that an examination might be made of the Horse Shoe Bar, at the mouth of the Miramichi River, and that a Grant might pass for the purpose of improving the Navigation of the said River and Harbour. In May, 1857, Her Majesty's Surveying vessel "Gulnare," Captain Orlebar, arrived in the River with instructions to co-operate with this Department in the necessary examination of the Bar. The Reports forwarded by Captain Orlebar, and the Engineer employed by the Board of Works, will be found in the Appendix, together with a letter from Captain Orlebar to the Provincial Secretary, and the reply of the latter. The opinion arrived at, by sounding and examining the nature of the obstruction, appears to be that no system of dredging or clearing out the Channel would have any beneficial effect on the navigation, commensurate with the expense, whilst the discovery of a second, and less intricate Channel across the Bar, affords additional safety to the Shipping, and lessens probability of detention at this point. The buoys which indicate the present Channel are taken up every Fall and replaced in the Spring, and steps have been taken so that next season the new Channel as well as the old will be carefully buoyed out, and the difficulty that has been already experienced very much obviated.