

and Richelieu, where it falls into the St. Lawrence at the town of William Henry in the seigniory of Sorel.—Of all the rivers that fall into the south side of the St. Lawrence within the bounds of Lower Canada, the largest, in respect of quantity of water, is the *Richelieu*, and it is also the best known. The principal origin of its waters is in the United States; and if we estimate the whole length of country from which it collects them, from the south point of Lake George to the termination of the river at Sorel, it cannot be less than 160 miles. The breadth of the same tract varies from 10 to 60 miles; taking it at the medium of 30 miles, the extent of country from which its waters are collected must be at least 4800 square miles. Only a small portion of this, however, lies within the province. From the province line to the mouth of the river the distance appears to be about 70 miles, and therefore the space, from which it collects the waters within the province, being a triangle of 30 miles base, will be 1050 square miles in extent, or one-fourth of the whole expanse which it drains. Its capabilities and defects as a water communication are well known. The improvement of the navigation of this river was considered by the legislature a matter of so much importance, that of the sum of £2,800 which the act directed should be laid out in the county of Richelieu, it was by the act specially provided that the sum of £1,500 should be applied “for the improvement of the river Richelieu between Sorel and Chambly.” This sum seems to have been found insufficient for the purposes which the legislature had in view, for we find that in 1826 an act was passed (6 Geo. IV. c. 33) “to facilitate the execution of the act of the 57th Geo. III. c. 13, inasmuch as it relates to the appointment of commissioners for the improvement of the navigation of the river Richelieu, and to appropriate a sum of money therein mentioned for that purpose.” By the last-mentioned act it is provided that the before-mentioned sum of £1,500, “or such part of the said sum as may remain unexpended, shall be applied for the aforesaid purpose, and as provided for by the said act, under the superintendence of the commissioners,” &c. And the act then goes on to say “that it shall be lawful for the governor, lieut.-governor, or person administering the government, for the time being, to advance and pay for the purpose herein above mentioned, by a warrant or warrants

under his hand, from such of the unappropriated moneys in the hands of the receiver-general of the province, a further sum not exceeding two thousand four hundred pounds currency, which said sum shall be applied by, and accounted for, as and in the same manner and by the same persons as provided and enacted with respect to the aforesaid sum of money remaining unexpended.” It is much to be lamented that this law has not yet been carried into effect. It is of a nature to have the most beneficial consequences. Why it has hitherto been allowed to remain as a dead letter in the statute-book we have no means of conjecturing; it is to be hoped, indeed to be expected, that it will not continue to be so. The Richelieu, affording a quick and easy water communication from the American territory into the very centre of the province, is entitled to consideration in more than one point of view. As a medium of commerce between the fertile districts of each country it merits attention, and it has a forcible claim to consideration from being a main inlet into the British territory, through which hostile operations might be directed with an alarming rapidity and perhaps for some time with serious consequences before they could be repelled or checked. Its banks are generally between eight and twelve feet high, diversified on each side by many farms and extensive settlements in a very high state of improvement; on or near it are some neat, populous and flourishing villages, handsome churches, numerous mills of various kinds, good roads in all directions, and every other characteristic of a country inhabited by an industrious population. The navigation is carried on by boats, canoes and other craft of large dimension and burden, and by rafts. From its junction with the St. Lawrence, decked vessels of one hundred and fifty tons may ascend from twelve to fourteen miles. This river is remarkable for being much narrower at its discharge than at the lake whence it flows, and for the gradual diminution of the breadth of its bed. At its mouth it is about two hundred and fifty yards wide, which it preserves, with the exception of one or two expansions occasioned by some small islands which greatly increase the beauty of its scenery, up to the Basin of Chambly; hence to the Isle du Portage the breadth is five hundred yards; beyond this it spreads to double that distance, and continues to widen still more up to St. John's, whence there is a ship navigation to