

SECRETARY'S OFFICE, Montreal, 13th August, 1849.

GENTLEMEN—In reply to your communication of the 9th inst., to Mr. Secretary Leslie, for the purpose of ascertaining the views of the Provincial Government, relative to the bearing of the clause of the act for the formation of a company to connect, by canal, the waters of Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence, and requesting an assurance that any line or terminii, which the Directors of any such company may adopt, will be approved of by the Government, I am commanded by his Excellency, the Governor General, to say that with the most anxious desire to facilitate the proceedings of any company which may be formed for carrying out an object of so much importance, to the Province, as that of connecting the St. Lawrence with the waters of Lake Champlain, His Excellency regrets that it is not in the power of the Executive to divest itself of, and transfer to others, a responsibility imposed upon it by the Legislature.

His Excellency will, however, immediately cause some competent person to be appointed for the purpose of proceeding, in connection with such engineers as may be employed by those whom you represent, to survey the various lines which may be proposed, in order that the requirement of the 2d section of the act above referred to may be fulfilled with the least possible delay.

I am further commanded to assure you, that any line for the proposed Canal, which may be determined upon with a due regard to the local advantages of the site chosen, and to the general interests of the Province, will, upon the necessary explanations being given, be unhesitatingly sanctioned by His Excellency, the Governor General.

I have the honor, &c.

J. PARENT, Clerk of Council.

On the 1st of August, pursuant to a previous arrangement, the committee, in three separate divisions, commenced an exploration of the country lying between Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence river; together with that portion of the Chambly canal which it was believed might be rendered available in the construction of the proposed work.

Two routes only were particularly presented to the consideration of the committee; one, pursuing the line of the Chambly canal for six or eight miles, and entering the St. Lawrence at Longueil, a little below Montreal on the opposite side of the river; the other, pursuing the course of the Chambly canal to the same point, and running thence in a westerly course to the Indian village of Caughnawaga, nine miles above Montreal. The first mentioned route is the shortest, so far as construction is concerned; embracing a distance from St. Johns to the St. Lawrence of twenty-three miles only. This route, including a portion of the Chambly canal, will require a lockage of 76 feet, to reach the level of the river at Longueil; which with the present lockage on the Lachine canal, of 45 feet, will make the total lockage, descending and ascending, between Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence above the Lachine rapids, 121 feet. The other route, embracing the same portion of the Chambly canal, will be about 33 miles in length; with a lockage of only 29 feet, to reach the same point on the St. Lawrence above the Lachine rapids.

To determine which of these routes should be adopted, the committee are of opinion, will require very careful surveys, and a minute examination of the advantages presented by each. That a canal of the proposed dimensions can be made on either of these routes, and perhaps on some other, and at a moderate cost compared with its magnitude, the committee have no doubt. And from the report made to us by Mr. Claxton, as well as from the personal observation of some of the committee, either of these two routes may probably be shortened four or five miles. The country, indeed, seems to be of a most favorable character for such a work; presenting no impediments of rock, or of deep cuttings, or impassible ravines, but exhibiting an almost uniform unbroken level, and con-