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Mr. Chair-

man, appears to me no reason at all, for the Company have that power now, and ought to exercise it, if it is necessary. The hon. gentleman says—If the province takes the Canal, the mother country would give aid in return for the benefit she would derive : I think she might assist by a grant of land ; but, from the difficulty which the hon. gentleman met with when he applied to the home Government, I much doubt her willingness, in these times of distress, to grant money. I think it fallacious to argue, that the Welland Canal will benefit Upper Canada in the same degree that the Erie canal benefits the state of New-York ; inasmuch as the latter work was carried through the interior of that country, and promoted the prosperity and wealth of every section which it passed through : Whereas, the Welland Canal only connects two great lakes, the navigation of which is already as good as it can be made, and affords now the means of as cheap transport as could be if the Canal were in perfect operation—save and except the difference of expense of transport by Queenston and the Canal. I cannot see that the province generally would benefit as much as is contended. The districts west of lake Ontario are certainly deeply interested in the fate of the Canal, and will, no doubt, prosper beyond example in consequence of it ; but I deny that the revenue of the province will be greatly increased thereby. The advantages to the mother country and to Lower Canada, are far greater than to us ; and therefore they ought to assist in the improvement of the great chain of communication which conducts to the port of Quebec the produce of the western countries, and which gives employment to a vast amount of shipping and seamen. This question involves other considerations besides the completion of the Welland Canal :—The improvement of the St. Lawrence will be the next subject to be thought of ; and I suppose some hon. gentlemen would not advocate the present measure did they not hope to receive the support of the House in passing a vote for 3 or 400 thousand pounds for that work. We are told to buy out the private stock of the Welland Canal Company, which amounts to £115,000, and pay off the debts, (£25,000 more,) and grant £8,500 to put the Canal in order for the business of the spring. These, Sir, are large sums of money, and, when added to the proposed expenditure on the St. Lawrence, will fall little short of £600,000. Now, Sir, I would ask you if the revenues of this young country, flourishing as they are, will warrant such an undertaking ? Is it right to lock up the whole means of the country, and do nothing for the inland rivers and roads ? Would not the best interests of the country be better consulted by opening and improving transit roads from the new settlements in every district to the main waters ? and by rendering the inland rivers navigable, than by expending the whole resources of the country on a communication which now affords, with the exception of the neck of land between the two lakes, every facility for transporting the agricultural products to market ? (*Hear, hear ! from the Speaker and some other members.*) The hon. Speaker may cry hear ! but if he will bring forward these improvements, in a statesman-like manner, by providing the ways and means—as is always done in the House of Commons—he will find me as ready to promote the work as any member of the House. But I will never consent to burthen the country with so great a debt, without at the same time providing a way to pay the interest annually, and in the end pay the principal. Gentlemen say—pay the interest out of the loan for a few years, and the works will pay for themselves : but this is a species of legislation which shall never have my approbation. Unforeseen accidents may happen, as experience has proved to be more than probable ; the works may require further grants ; and