

The settlers informed me that from Sugar Loaf up to the Grand River the ice in the Lake and bays breaks up much about the same time, and that this year it began to give way on the 1st day of March, and finally cleared out from Graybiel's bay on the 22d of that month. From such information as I have been able to obtain, I learn that the ice left Buffalo harbor this year, on the 19th day of April, a month after the lake was open from Gravelly bay and upwards on the British side. Last year the Grand River and Lake near it were open and clear of ice on the 11th of April, and it is stated in a supplementary report of the Board of Directors of the Welland Canal, that no vessel could have entered the port of Buffalo from the upper parts of Lake Erie, that season, earlier than the 14th of May.

By means of the boat navigation termed "the feeder" the main canal will be placed in communication with the Grand River; which is now navigable for twelve miles above the Dam, and it appears by the evidence afforded to a select Committee of the House of Assembly during the Session of 1828, that at a moderate expense it can be opened for boat navigation many miles higher up, passing through a rich and populous section of country abounding in timber of all descriptions, and which now exports annually a large value in flour, ashes, pork, whisky, lumber, gypsum, and other produce.

By the feeder, the main canal will be placed in communication with the waters of the Grand River below Dunnville, as soon as a lock shall have been erected in the Dam—and with the Niagara river above the Falls, and the populous and wealthy settlements on its banks, it is connected by the River Welland, which is also navigable for at least 18 miles beyond the Deep Cut, into the interior of the Niagara District.

The Canal intersects nearly 30 miles of country, fertile and well settled, and is accessible from Lakes Erie and Ontario with Schooners—Being chiefly intended for Ship or Schooner navigation, the shortest possible route to its grand western termination that offers a safe and convenient harbor ought to be adopted.

The attention of the Legislature of Upper Canada appears to have been early attracted to the important subject of uniting *Lake Erie* with the ocean—In 1821 a Statute was passed authorising the appointment of a commission "for the purpose of exploring, surveying and leveling the most practicable routes for opening a communication by Canals and Locks between Lake Erie and the Eastern Boundary of this Province."—That Commission reported early in 1823 in favor of a ship navigation throughout,

and considered it of the highest importance that the assistance of Lower Canada should be obtained. Of this line, the Welland Canal is the only part that has been attempted to be opened; and it is gratifying to perceive, that the undertaking approaches towards a successful termination. To Mr. William Hamilton Merritt, the Superintendent, great praise is unquestionably due for his indefatigable exertions to accomplish the work—though often placed in very difficult situations. I heartily concur with Capt. Basil Hall, in the opinion he has expressed, "that to" Mr. Merritt's "perseverence and knowledge of the subject, as well as his great personal exertions this useful work stands mainly indebted for its success."

A COMMERCIAL EMPORIUM.

It is a circumstance greatly to be regretted that Upper Canada remains destitute of a Commercial Emporium under its control, and to which its rich and growing commerce could be directed. The trade of this colony being attracted to Montreal and Quebec, diffuses its "general warmth" over the whole of the sister province—adds to its wealth, its productive industry, its power, and its population—and yields a rich revenue, over which we have not that official control to which it appears to me that we are of right entitled. The means of paying the interest and ultimately, the principal of a loan, which would be sufficient to continue the navigation of the Welland Canal, unbroken to the ocean; is in the hands of the sister colony, and chiefly arises out of the commerce of the ports of Montreal and Quebec. A further claim on the Legislature of Lower Canada for assistance to defray the cost of the Welland navigation, seems to me, under those circumstances, fair and reasonable.

Provided the produce of the Upper Lakes within the territories of the United States shall be allowed to pass through the Canal—the tolls will be greatly augmented; a considerable traffic created; and the countries on its borders enriched. It is by far the best and cheapest route, even to the New York Market and will of course receive a preference.

The expenditure upon the Canal has given a large and wholesome circulation to money, and enriched many. Villages are starting into existence upon its borders, and new employment is created for individual industry. New capital is attracted and put in operation; settlers are induced to purchase lots and commence improvements, and the additional value of their skill and labour will add to the wealth of the Province and the strength of the nation.