

Canadian Government,—principally for the reason that the greater number of the leading men of the Province are personally interested in the improvement of the St. Lawrence, and partly because not being well informed upon the actual importance of the valley of the Ottawa to Canada, they do not see clearly the necessity of expending the public funds in improving its navigation. In developing the resources of a country just emerging from the wildness of nature into that state of cultivation which fits it for the abode of civilized man, the first object of the Legislature should be to render its internal means of communication as perfect as possible, since without high-ways, either natural or artificial, traversing the territory in all directions, a portion of it must remain unapproachable, and consequently unproductive. Of what value to the Canadian public are the vast tracts of fertile and uninhabited country in the valley of the Upper Ottawa so long as they cannot be reached by people desirous of settling there. Persons, it is true, after leaving the Joachim,—the upper extremity of steamboat navigation—may ascend by canoes to Mattawan, and may there settle in the woods; but as it would be impossible for them to be supplied, unless at an enormous cost, with the imported goods,—such as iron, sugar, tea, cloth, and the thousand-and-one other articles that agriculturists cannot grow or manufacture for themselves,—there can be little inducement for them to make the attempt. The case of that man must be desperate indeed who would voluntarily place the ban of exile upon himself and his family into a wilderness, cut off from civilization by the many impediments in the way of travel upon the Upper Ottawa. Unless the river be improved, the extensive country in the neighbourhood of Lake Nipissing can only be settled by exceedingly slow degrees. And when it is settled, how is the surplus produce to be disposed of. If a man should make a barrel of Potash on the shores of the Mattawan, how is he to send it to Montreal? How would an agricultural population in that part of the Province dispose of their Butter, Cheese, Tallow, Lard, Eggs, Poultry, Vegetables, and other minor products which make so important an item in the profits of farming? And, on the other hand, how is the settlement to be supplied with those articles of merchandise without which men must be utterly comfortless. We look upon this subject of providing facilities for the settlement of the country as one of the greatest national importance. We do not think the Government justified in undertaking expensive public works merely for the sake of the revenue that might be derived from the tolls, but we do think that a work which would immediately result in spreading a broad sheet of thriving industry over thousands of square miles of now uninhabited country must be one of the very greatest importance. Such a work should receive the most anxious consideration from the Government and every member of the Legislature. They should have the river surveyed by competent Engineers, and if it be not practicable to make a large canal, one at