

shore of the St. Lawrence, but it was exceedingly dangerous and many portages intervened between navigable stretches. Even in these so-called navigable stretches, towing had to be resorted to. A number of accidents had already happened in which men and canoes had been lost. In the year 1700, the Superior of the Sulpicians, Mr. Dollier de Casson, undertook to improve the Little River St. Pierre, and to make it navigable for canoes, from its mouth to Lake St. Pierre, a shallow body of water lying about half way between Montreal and Lachine (this lake has long disappeared, owing chiefly to the works done in connection with the Lachine canal), and to open up a cut from the lake to a point on the St. Lawrence above the worst part of the rapids.

A notable contract was passed, between the contractor, Gédéon de Ca'alogne and Mr. Dollier de Casson, for the excavation of a canal 24 arpents, or about one mile, in length, twelve feet wide at the surface of the ground and of varying width at the bottom, according to the depth of cutting. The water flowing through the canal was to be at least eighteen inches deep at the period of lowest water in the St. Lawrence.

The work was begun in October, 1700, and in February of the year following the contractor failed, after having performed the greater part of his contract, the whole of the cut being completed at the time, except for a depth of three or four feet on some 2,100 feet in length.

The canal was excavated for about one-third of its length through clay mixed with boulders, the balance being through quarry rock.

A settlement was made with the contractor in the Spring, the amount paid being 12,500 livres, which represents about \$15,000 of our present currency.

The work was left in this unfinished condition, notwithstanding the repeated attempts to push it to completion, the Sulpicians' revenues, which were very unimportant at that time, finding better use in other directions.

In 1708, Louis XIV ordered plans and estimates of the work to be submitted to him, the undertaking having been recognized as devolving upon the royal authorities, but, owing to the conditions of affairs in France during the latter part of the reign, the scheme had to be again postponed.

Almost every year after this, the *Canal de la Chine* mentioned in the correspondence between the superiors of the Montreal house and the head of the Sulpician Order in Paris, as also in letters addressed to the governors of the colony.

In 1717, Mr. Chaussegros de Léry, who had charge of all military and civil engineering works in Montreal, reported that three-fourths