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OF CANADA.)

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The Canadian Monetary Times.

THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 1869.

THE CANADIAN CANALS.

NO. IV.

Hitherto the functions of the Canadian Canals have been but imperfectly argued, because much of the result to be attained has been a matter of theory. Indeed the basis of argument has been incomplete, from the confined character of our knowledge. Within the last few days the want has been supplied; and in place of venturing on conclusions from what is unknown and untried, we have the solid hypothesis of what has been effected. We have facts to guide us. Between Chicago and Montreal the route is known, for it has long been established. The limit of vessels navigating this distance, both as regards burden and time, is admitted beyond dispute. Thus, the question of what can be effected in this limit is not even raised. The moment, however, we propose to pass Montreal, we meet contradictory opinions. While experienced mariners of the lake and

river navigation have argued that vessels should pass from Chicago to the Atlantic; that with the navigation developed to its maximum, a class of vessels would come into use fitted satisfactorily to serve the trade; the contrary view has been urged—and it is especially in favor in Montreal—that ocean going vessels are unfitted for river navigation. And the formula thus roughly catched, is confidently adduced as a sound reason why the depth of the Canals should remain unaltered. Consequently all improvements of locks is conceived in the direction of width and length, so as to admit of large river going vessels which are to discharge their cargo at the Montreal wharves, or to transfer it to one of the Allan steamers. It can easily be seen how the argument, if such it can be called, becomes interminable, and that assertion on either side is the great weapon of controversy according to the temper of the disputant. These days are now passed away for ever. We have the known experience of the propeller "Her Majesty," which returned from Halifax to Montreal harbor the last day of May.

We are now able to prove every anticipated result, and that which until now has been supposition, becomes positive. Accordingly we may say that a propeller on lake Erie in front of Buffalo harbor, is much nearer to New York in time and that its cargo, can be delivered at less cost, if the vessel continue its route by the Saint Lawrence, and pass by the gulf to Halifax and so to New York, than if it proceeded to Buffalo to one of the basins of the Erie Canal and transferred its cargo to barges, navigating that canal, and so follow its line to Albany, to be towed up to New York by the steam tugs of the Hudson. The time necessary for the trip may be set down at 13 days.

Proceeding to wharf and transfer of cargo,	1 day
Passage through the Erie Canal,	11 "
Proceeding to New York,	1 "
	13 "

Such may be taken as the average result established in practice. Equally, we have now the opposite condition satisfied, and the proof has been made by the last trip of "Her Majesty." The distances are as follows:—

From Montreal to Quebec,	180 miles.
" Quebec to Pictou,	500 "
" Pictou to Halifax,	210 "

Total from Montreal to Halifax, 890 "

This distance was easily made by "Her Majesty" in six days, and such is the time counted upon and estimated as the basis, on which the arrangement of her trips is determined. She loads in Montreal with sufficient coals to carry her to Pictou, a voyage of four days—680 miles. Here she remains some

20 hours, and receives an additional supply to carry her to Halifax and back. Thence she takes one day to proceed to Halifax. On her return, this vessel again loads up at Pictou with coal, and if her cargo is entirely of coal, for it is here that the mines are situated, and coal is sold at \$2 a ton, she retains enough to carry her back there. This place, indeed, is the coal depot, and will ever be so on this route, and the importance of the fact is great. Vessels leaving for England, if ever such pass by the St. Lawrence, from Chicago, would take in a supply at some station on the Gulf laid down by tenders from Pictou. Why not make such vessels the means of supplying the wants of Gaspé? There, such a depot could be economically established, and the circumstance of calling with regularity would ensure a moderate degree of freight, and give a great impetus to the district. But for vessels going from the West to Boston or New York, Pictou lies directly on the route, and furnishes at once a magazine, where fuel not only can be cheaply bought, but where it can be more cheaply obtained than elsewhere. Accordingly, so far as fuel is considered, it would be the starting point, whence the propeller would base its supply, taking in sufficient to proceed to New York, and return; or, on the other hand, sufficient to proceed to Toronto or Chicago, and return, as the case might be. Consequently, on the examination of this view, we at once get rid of all thought of fuel, simply stating that it can be more readily and economically obtained than on any other route.

It is proved that a vessel can reach Halifax from Montreal in six days, and it follows that a vessel going to Halifax can go any where else.

From Halifax to Boston, the distance is about 380 miles, which can be made in less than two days.

From Halifax to New York, by Cape Sable, and passing within Long Island, the distance is about 625 miles, and it can be made in about three days.

Thus we have the trip from Montreal to Boston, including loading with fuel at Pictou, determined to be a matter of eight days.

The same trip from Montreal to Halifax, and thence to New York, will not exceed 9 days.

To each of these periods must be added the time necessary to descend from the foot of Lake Erie to Montreal, a matter of 60 hours; that is, passing through all the Canals, is equal to 2½ days.

Consequently, while we have a cargo of wheat transhipped at Buffalo, passing by the Erie Canal to New York, taking 13 days to arrive there.