

their discretion to authorize Colonel By to proceed with the construction of the locks.

There is a limit to increased dimensions?—I only wish to point out the manner in which the public service is directed to be executed, when the principle of expenditure is agreed upon. The error was in the first Estimate.

When the Colonial Office received an Estimate for a Canal 150 miles long, through a hitherto unexplored country, and with the works of such magnitude contemplated, did it strike them as at all probable that the work could be completed for such a sum; and how did it happen that they felt themselves justified in calling on Parliament to vote money on the faith of such an Estimate?—The Canal in question was not a canal in the sense ordinarily attached to that word, but a connection of natural watercourses existing between the two points merely requiring levels to carry on one communication throughout this natural line; therefore the analogy of a canal would present no very satisfactory data on the subject. The Ordnance department having communicated to the Colonial department an Estimate drawn up by an officer of acknowledged talent and ability, specially selected by them to report on the subject, and that officer having added to the Estimate of the Civil Engineer a sum which brought up the whole to 169,000*l.* the Colonial Department considered that a sufficient authority to direct that the work should be proceeded with, and instructions were accordingly given.

Are you aware, that in the early communications on the subject of this Water Communication, as far as the Ottawa is concerned, the Duke of Richmond, and other persons in authority in Canada, had led Government at home to expect that the Colonial Legislature would bear a part of the expense, and that the Treasury only agreed to undertake the work on the distinct understanding that half the expense would be paid by the Colonies?—I am only aware of that circumstance from recollection; it took place before I was in office.

In the year 1819, the understanding was, that the Provincial Legislature were to defray half the expense; and in 1823, without the explanation having been communicated to Parliament, it seems to have been felt by the Government that the whole expense of the Water Communication on the Ottawa was to be defrayed by the Government at home; are you aware upon what ground Government altered their opinion?—With respect to the Minute of 1819, being long before I was in office, I know nothing officially on the subject. I believe that the change of intention alluded to was founded upon a conviction that the Assembly of Lower Canada would not consent to bear their share of the expense, and, notwithstanding their refusal, it was deemed expedient for the public interest that the work should be done, though undertaken exclusively by this country.

You are aware that a Bill has passed two readings in the Colonial Legislature, granting a considerable sum of money from the Provinces for those works, on conditions?—I am aware of that fact.

The Rt. Hon.
Robert W. Horton.

24 March,
1831.