

Were the objects of commerce the sole considerations to be weighed, this route might be found to answer the desired end ; but, when it is recollected that the whole of the communication above Prescott, until it reaches Kingston, passes along the frontier of the United States—that throughout the whole extent, a distance of sixty miles, it is filled with islands and intricate channels, admirably adapted for ambuscades, it must be obvious, that this commerce, in time of war, would be exposed to imminent hazard of being obstructed or destroyed.

When all these circumstances are duly investigated and considered, the superiority of this route over every other, may fairly be called in question.

On passing to the fourth and last plan, which has occurred to the Commissioners, they have to observe, that it combines all the advantages of, and is free from all the objections to the other three.

Kingston, the principal military depot of the Upper Province, and the only naval station within its limits, is the point of departure. From thence to the Ottawa river, by the Cataraqui and the Rideau, or the Petit Nation, the course of the proposed canal lies completely in the interior. The distance to the markets of Lower Canada, in this direction, may, it is true, be rather greater than by the St. Lawrence, but this distance is by no means such as to counter-balance the security of the route, and the benefits which would accrue to the whole interior country from opening a canal in that direction.

In the event of war, it is true, the intercourse between Kingston and the upper parts of the lake, would depend on the successful operations of the Royal Navy ; and in the event of the enemy's obtaining the superiority, our communication by water would be interrupted ; yet supplies, naval and military, provisions or merchandise, might be transported to Kingston by the proposed canal, and from thence, as during the late war, conveyed by the bay of Quinte and the lake shore, to York and Burlington bay : while, by the facility thus afforded for the transportation of every species of equipment, our means would be increased, and we might be enabled to regain the superiority on the lakes.

With these views, the Commissioners determined to prosecute the survey of the route from Grand River to Burlington Bay ; also, by the main channel of the St. Lawrence, and that from Kingston to the Ottawa, by the Rideau and other interior waters. It seemed advisable to carry on all these surveys at the same time, if a sufficient number of scientific persons could have been engaged ; but that being at the time impracticable, and the season being rather far advanced for entering on a very extensive scheme of operations, the whole was postponed until May last ; the Board was therefore adjourned till that period.

In the meantime Mr. Gill suggested to the Board, the propriety and advantage of running a level, during the winter, over the country in the neighbourhood of Burlington bay, by which he observed, that the operations in the ensuing spring would be much facilitated. Confiding in his judgment and science, the Commissioners acceded to his proposal, and authorized him to devote six weeks to the superficial examination of the country as he had suggested. The Commissioners, however, lament to say, that they were grievously disappointed by the result of this exploratory attempt, by which they were involved in considerable expense, without reaping any adequate advantage. They refer to the report and field-notes presented by the Engineer ; which, in their opinion, do not support the pretensions to scientific acquirements in the line of his profession, nor the flattering testimonials of character which he had previously laid before them. It is painful to make these observations, yet the nature of the case, and the extent of the expenditure uselessly incurred, through their reliance on the accuracy and ability of a person so well recommended, render them unavoidable. At a meeting of the Board, on the 13th May last, when they received Mr. Gill's report, they directed him to be settled with, and dispensed with his further services.

Mr. Samuel Clowes was then engaged as a civil engineer, who was originally intended to explore and level the route from Kingston to the Ottawa.

The Board, however, having been disappointed in procuring the services of a person in that line in the United States, with whom they had corresponded, directed Mr. Clowes to commence with the survey between the Grand River and Burlington bay, and engaged his son as an assistant, and Mr. John Harris as a land surveyor, to accompany him.

They commenced their operations about the first of June, and, after six months of indefatigable exertions through a difficult and (as it proved) a very little known country, brought them to a successful