

AN IMPROVED WELLAND, EVEN WITHOUT AN IMPROVED ST. LAWRENCE, IS FAR PREFERABLE TO THE GEORGIAN BAY ROUTE.

While an improved St. Lawrence is the ideal and natural condition, an improved Welland Canal, even without an improved St. Lawrence, is far preferable and far cheaper than any sort of canal on the Georgian Bay plan. With an improved Welland Canal large boats can take their cargoes to Prescott, from which point barges in waiting can await wire advice from ocean steamers, and in a brief interval they can lie along side these steamers at Montreal and transfer their cargo direct to the ocean boat while the ocean boat is at the wharf taking on other cargo; whereas, if the large boats went clear to Montreal they would naturally discharge into an elevator, and separate and additional time would be required for the loading of the ocean steamer.

This method of carriage through an improved Welland Canal, while by no means on a par with an ocean waterway, is comparatively cheap, economical and practical, and is superior to the new Erie Barge Canal. Experienced vessel men pronounce the plan in every way preferable to any possible Georgian Bay canal; and the Welland improvement would probably cost but one-fifth or one-sixth as much as the other project.

THE GEORGIAN BAY PROJECT AND NOVA SCOTIA COAL.

Under existing conditions Nova Scotia coal can be sold profitably only as far west as Montreal. The Georgian Bay promoters advocate, as an advantageous feature of their project, that coal could be loaded in bottoms at Sydney and carried profitably via the Georgian Bay Canal to the far west. The Waterways Union claim, on the contrary, that transportation by an improved St. Lawrence and Welland is far cheaper and more practical than by any possible Georgian Bay Canal. If, then, such be the facts, and all unbiassed engineers will so report, this Nova Scotia Coal would go by the St. Lawrence and Welland Canal, if both of these projects were built and constructed. Whether for the transportation of coal from the Maritime provinces westward, or the carrying of grain Eastward, the St. Lawrence Welland route would discount the Georgian Bay Project many times over both as to time of transit, capacity of route and cost of insurance. In any event the ships carrying grain eastward require return cargoes, otherwise they must charge double rates for carrying the grain. The best means of opening a trade for Nova Scotia coal in the Canadian West is to develop a water route, whereby this transfer of grain and coal east and west respectively can be best and most cheaply made; and this route, beyond question, is via a properly developed St. Lawrence and Welland waterway.

A certain amount of anthracite and bituminous coal from Pennsylvania and Ohio will always be required in the west. The natural channel for this traffic is clearly from the Lake Erie ports westward to the Upper Lakes. Since this natural channel for Pennsylvania and Ohio coal is already available at Buffalo and other Lake Erie ports, a development of the St. Lawrence River and Welland Canal could not injure in any way, but would greatly further, the prospect of opening a trade for Nova Scotia coal in Western Canada.