

2d Session, 9th Parliament, 5th Geo: IV.

As to the order in which the internal improvements suggested should be taken up by the Province, it appears obvious to the committee that the concurrence of the parent state ought to determine us to apply our first exertions to the communication from Kingston to the Ottawa, and besides the prospect of a canal from Lake Erie to Ontario being accomplished by a private company, appears to the committee to put it out of the question that public attention should be turned to the other with the least possible delay.

At the same time, the committee are of opinion, that regarding only the commercial interests of the Province in time of peace with the United States, and setting out of view all other considerations, the improvement of the river St. Lawrence would naturally first engage attention, because there can be little doubt that a much less expenditure than would be necessary for effecting an internal communication, would render this direct and natural channel to the ocean, more convenient for all purposes of trade.

Under any view of the subject, it appears to the committee so important that no time should be lost in ascertaining the nature and probable cost of the required improvement of the St. Lawrence, that they have come to certain resolutions on that subject, which, they trust, will meet with the approbation of the legislature, and which are annexed to this report. The most unfortunate disadvantage to which we are subjected in our navigation of the St. Lawrence by the cession of Barnhart's island to the Americans, if that cession must be final, demands the earliest and most earnest attention of the Province, in order that before any expense is incurred in improving the channel of the river in other parts of its course, it may be known how we can best avert the evil of our extraordinary exclusion from the navigation at that point.

Upon the subject of the navigation of the St. Lawrence, the committee have to state that they have had under their consideration the petition of Daniel Sutherland, Esq. and others, praying to be incorporated as a company for improving the navigation of the St. Lawrence by deepening its bed and removing obstructions and by facilitating the ascent of boats by chains and fastenings to be used in the channel. It appears to the committee, from the information they have received, that there is ground to believe the improvement thus suggested might be accomplished at an expense easily to be compassed by a private association; but besides that, they have not the means of satisfying themselves as to the expediency of adopting such a mode of improvement, they are apprehensive that it might interfere with the more obvious and effectual system of making a channel fit for sloop navigation near the shore with locks where they may be necessary, and a towing path, and they would hesitate to recommend the vesting in any company an exclusive right that might be found to occasion inconvenience in the passage through this great and natural outlet to the sea.

The committee recommends that a sufficient number of copies of this report, with the accompanying resolutions, if the same shall meet with the concurrence of the legislature, be printed, and that the act of 1821, appointing the commissioners for the improvement of the internal navigation, the several reports of the commissioners in their order, and the letter of Mr. Macaulay referred to, be printed as an appendix.

All which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN STRACHAN,
Chairman of the Committee for the Legislative Council.
ANGUS McINTOSH.

JOHN B. ROBINSON,
Chairman of the Committee of the House of Assembly.
WILLIAM MORRIS,
J. GORDON.

Joint Committee Room, April 6th, 1825.

Resolved, That the offer of His Majesty's government to grant a loan of £70,000 to assist in opening a canal from the Ottawa River to Kingston, calls for the warmest gratitude of His Majesty's Canadian subjects and the earliest consideration of a measure so important to the prosperity of both Provinces.

Resolved, That the extensive tract of fertile country on the line of the proposed canal will, without a water communication to market, long remain unsettled and the inhabitants of that populous portion of the Province still more remote from the St. Lawrence will continue to suffer great inconvenience and loss in carrying their products over land to its banks.

Resolved, That a Canal connecting Lake Ontario and the Ottawa River will secure to the Government the most effectual means of defence in the event of a war with the United States of America, and to the Inhabitants of Upper and Lower Canada, a safe inland navigation, when the exposed situation of the St. Lawrence might render commerce dangerous and perhaps impracticable.

Resolved, That it is proper to request the Legislature of Lower Canada to unite with this Parliament in carrying into effect a work of equal importance and interest to the inhabitants of both Provinces, and in order to raise a fund to pay the annual interest of the proposed loan, and ultimately to liquidate the principal, it is necessary to impose a small additional duty on such articles of general consumption imported into Quebec as will best bear it, and prove least burthensome to His Majesty's subjects.

Resolved, That an humble address be presented to his Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, praying that his Excellency will be pleased to communicate a copy of the foregoing resolutions to the government of Lower Canada to be laid before the Parliament of that Province.

Resolved, That it is expedient to ascertain with the least possible delay, the depth of water on the north side of Barnharts Island, in the River St. Lawrence the facilities which that channel affords for boat navigation and the transportation of Lumber, and whether, in case of its being found capable of improvement so as to admit of such navigation without difficulty, rafts of timber, and heavy crafts descending the river from Prescott can be conveniently brought into that channel.

Resolved, That an humble address be presented to his Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased, as soon as the season will permit, to direct a survey of the said part of the river St. Lawrence for the purpose aforesaid, and that the person employed to perform the same be instructed to report to his Excellency, for the information of the legislature, the practicability and probable expense of removing the obstructions and deepening the bed of the river so as to allow rafts of the ordinary breadth drawing four feet of water, to pass down.

Resolved, That the expense incurred in making the said survey, be made good to his Excellency at the next session of the legislature.

Resolved, That it is expedient to address his Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, praying that his Excellency will communicate to the government of Lower Canada the earnest wish of the legislature of this Province, that the recommendation of the arbitrators sanctioned by our act, 4th Geo. 4, chap. 22, should also receive the sanction of the legislature of Lower Canada in order that it may be carried immediately into effect, the subject matter thereof being of such great and undoubted interest to both Provinces.

Resolved, That it is expedient to address his Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, to pray that his Excellency, in case the legislature of Lower Canada shall separate without making any provision for carrying into effect the recommendation of the arbitrators above referred to, will direct a survey to be made, for the information of the legislature, of the waters of the St. Lawrence from the town of Johnstown to the eastern extremity of this Province in order to ascertain in what manner and for what expense a navigation can be effected, fit for schooners drawing seven feet water, to ascend, as well as descend, and affording a towing path along the whole line of the course, with the exception of the Lake Saint Francois, and that part of the river which will be embraced on the survey to be made of the waters near Barnhart's island.

Mr. Morris, seconded by Mr. J. Jones, moves that the House do now resolve itself into a committee of the whole on that part of the journals of last session relative to the report of the joint committee on internal navigation, together with the resolutions annexed, read.

Which was carried, and Mr. C. Jones was called to the chair.

The House resumed.

Mr. Jones reported that the committee had risen for want of a quorum.

Present—Messrs. Attorney General, Beasley, Burke, Cameron, Clark, Gordon, Ingersol, C. Jones, J. Jones, Lafferty, Lyons, McDonald,