

A Gigantic Undertaking.

The present project for the utilization of the rivers and lakes between the Georgian Bay and St. Lawrence River covers a distance of 440 miles and involves the construction of numerous dams and reservoirs for the purpose of maintaining an equal supply of water the year around. It will readily be understood that a project depending for its success upon an artificial supply of water obtained in this way would be a doubtful means of transportation and one that could not be relied upon at all times. There are also other difficulties to overcome and lift locks would be necessary in order to surmount the height of land between the Georgian Bay and the St. Lawrence river.

Distance.

The distance to Montreal by the proposed waterway is 934 miles; via Lake Erie and the Welland canal 1,216 miles, a difference of 282 miles in favor of the Georgian Bay route. In the Interim Report presented by the government on this subject appears the following.

"As compared with a possible improved system of St. Lawrence canals to a depth of 22 feet, assuming that the number of locks would be greatly reduced and some of the channels widened, probably no practical benefit in time of transit could be claimed, the saving in distance being nearly offset by the longer stretches of lake and wide river navigation which exists through the Lake Erie and Lake Ontario route, where higher speeds would be permissible."

It will be seen from the quotation given above that even the engineers engaged to report on this project are doubtful of its superiority in the matter of time over the existing route by way of the Welland canal and St. Lawrence river.

Cost of Construction.

It is estimated that the Georgian Bay canal as now proposed would cost the country ONE HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS, but estimates are invariably unreliable and it is extremely doubtful that it can be constructed at this figure, and competent transportation critics state that it would mean an expenditure of at least TWO HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS, with a strong probability that even that sum would be insufficient to carry the project through to completion.

Danger From Dams and Reservoirs.

The following dispatch from North Bay under date of the 17th, June, will give an idea of the danger that would be incurred through the construction of dams and reservoirs necessary for the success of the proposed Georgian Bay canal:

"The effect of dams built over a year ago at French river to keep the waters of Lake Nipissing at normal level the year round has been most disastrous, especially this year, with the abnormally high water. Much property along the shore line has been flooded and in the eastern section of North Bay and among the summer cottages considerable damage has been done, while a number of building lots have been submerged. Representations made to the government by the town council of North Bay resulted in an examination, followed by the blowing up with dynamite of one of the dams yesterday to allow the water to get away.

"New dams will be constructed on different plans, as those in use were utterly useless in coping with spring freshets, and should never have been put there."

Possibly nothing more forcible could be written to show the folly of constructing the Georgian Bay canal than is contained in the above dispatch. A project depending for its success on such a system of water supply would be a constant source of danger to the shipping interests, and we do not believe that the Canadian people will willingly