

That in a little over a hundred years, we have been able to spend about \$100,000,000 in perfecting our canal system, is evidence of the marvellous development of Canada, but our present prosperity should not cause us to forget that, after all, we have only been following in the footsteps of the men who inaugurated the improvements.

The present degree of perfection of our canals was not attained at one bound after the first ones had been completed. Three different periods, marking a corresponding development of the population and riches of the country, followed the one ended in 1816.

The history of each of these periods would furnish ample matter for a volume, if the military, political, commercial, and financial aspects of the question as well as the engineering features were to be considered. The intention of the writer, much to your satisfaction and relief, I am sure, is not to embark here in such an undertaking. There remains only for him to place before your eyes, in a series of tables, a resumé of the works performed by the canal engineers of the country during the last century.

These figures will show, in a concrete and striking form, the wonderful use a young and enterprising people has made of the natural resources with which Providence has endowed their land.

Our system, as summarized in the table referring to the fourth period, although pretty complete, is not yet perfected and the next twenty years will likely see the realization of a project which has, for the better part of a century, baunted the minds of political men and engineers in Canada.

I refer to the Montreal, Ottawa, and Georgian Bay canal undertaking which, as you are aware, is well under way.

After these immense works shall have been executed, at a probable cost of another \$100,000,000, Canada will be justified in calling a halt in her canal construction.