
THE SAULT STE. MARIE SHIP CANAL.

During the present season active operations towards the construction of this great work will commence.

It is a much needed improvement and one that will tend to increase our independence of the threatened retaliatory movements of our American neighbors.

It is to be regretted that the canal will only have a depth of water over the nitre sills of 17 feet.

During 1888, a Waterways Convention was held at Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., at which representatives from all the important points on the lakes attended. It seemed to be their unanimous verdict that the canal which is commenced on the American side should have a depth of water of 20 feet.

It is so the intention that the lake and river channels between Chicago and Buffalo and Duluth and Buffalo should be improved until they eventually are of a corresponding depth.

In fact, already has the United States Government expended some hundreds of thousands of dollars on what is known as the Hay Lake Channel, which is being deepened to that extent, and when this work is completed it will, as well as being a better channel and one navigable by day or night, shorten the distance between Lakes Huron and Superior nearly 15 miles.

Therefore, it is only reasonable to suppose and expect that by the time the Canadian "Soo" canal is completed that our American rivals will have one capable of passing a steamship loaded to 20 feet or with a carrying capacity of nearly 150,000 bushels of wheat; and our canal will then be behind the age.

It is too late now, with the Welland completed, the St. Lawrence system, in some parts, finished, to discuss the 14 feet system in vogue there.

We will know and appreciate our requirements better when we see cargoes of from 3,000 to 4,000 tons carried to Buffalo, while the maximum load to Montreal cannot be over 2,000 tons.

CANAL TOLLS.

Following the subject of canals, it might not be inopportune to discuss here the question of canal tolls.

As you are aware, tolls varying according to the commodities carried, are levied on the ships and cargoes passing through any canal in our vast system.

While the amounts collected do not, to any appreciable extent, increase the revenue of the Dominion, they seriously hamper and embarrass not only the Canadian marine but eventually are a tax in nearly all cases on the tiller of the soil. Wheat, for instance, intended for export, pays nearly five eighths of a cent per bushel under the tariff, or enough to pay the marine insurance on a bushel during the summer months from Port Arthur to Montreal.

Lately, the experiment has been tried of refunding 18 cents per ton of the tolls on all grain which is shipped to Montreal. This, of course, does not allow the rebate on any cargoes destined for points on either the Canadian or American sides of Lake Ontario, or on Canadian or American grain, carried in vessels of either country, intended for export via Ogdensburg Railways.

This has been a much discussed subject during the past year, American politicians claiming it to be a virtual discrimination against American