

The great work of overcoming the obstacle that nature has placed between the waters of two sections of this Dominion, which has taxed the ingenuity of engineers for more than half a century, is worth any cost. Ten, or even twenty millions, is little enough to pay for the development of the shipping interests, the fishing interests, the lumber interests, the mining interests, the quarrying interests, the farming interests, the opening up of new sections of country, the bringing of products to markets now not easily reached, and all the other advantages that will follow the successful accomplishment of this Isthmian transit; but the Ship Railway is the best (if not the only) method of removing this great impediment to commerce. There is no necessity of throwing money away on a Canal when the Ship Railway will cost the country so much less. The cost of the Ship Canal was estimated by Mr. PAGE in 1873 at \$8,500,000. The interest on this at four per cent. is \$340,000 a year. The cost of the Ship Railway is at most only \$170,000 a year, the capital being found by the Company. The subsidy capitalized for twenty years, at four per cent., is only \$2,343,000. Thus the Ship Railway, which will be so much more serviceable than a Canal, will cost \$6,157,000 less than a Canal at first cost, besides saving the annual interest of \$340,000 a year, and the maintenance and repairs, which are simply not to be calculated. In face of these figures, and of the fact that the proposed Canal would not have accommodated the paddle-wheel steamers, what Government would now entertain the idea of building a Canal in place of the Ship Railway? Had the Canal been proceeded with, the country would have committed an error, involving the most serious consequences, to be regretted only once, and that would be for ever.

I remain, your obedient servant,

H. G. C. KETCHUM.

Fredericton, Aug. 23, 1887.