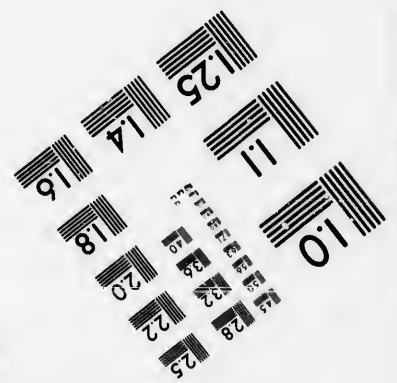
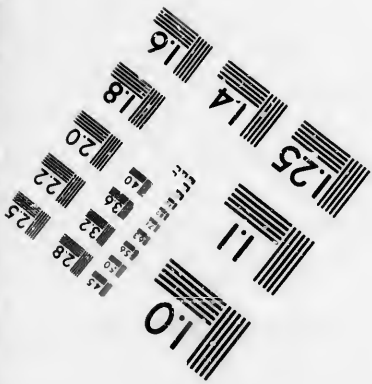
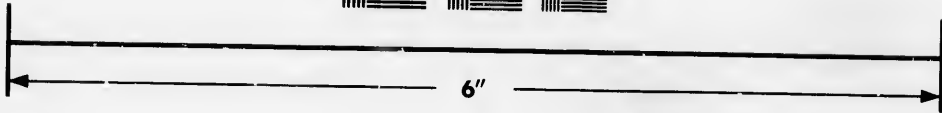
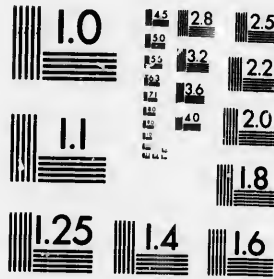


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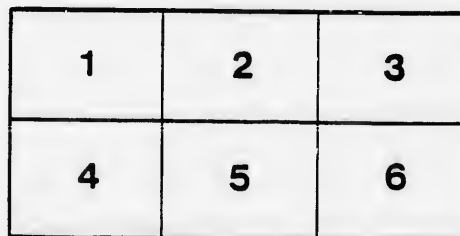
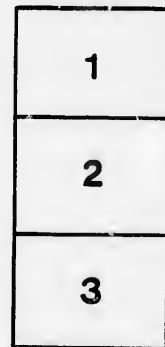
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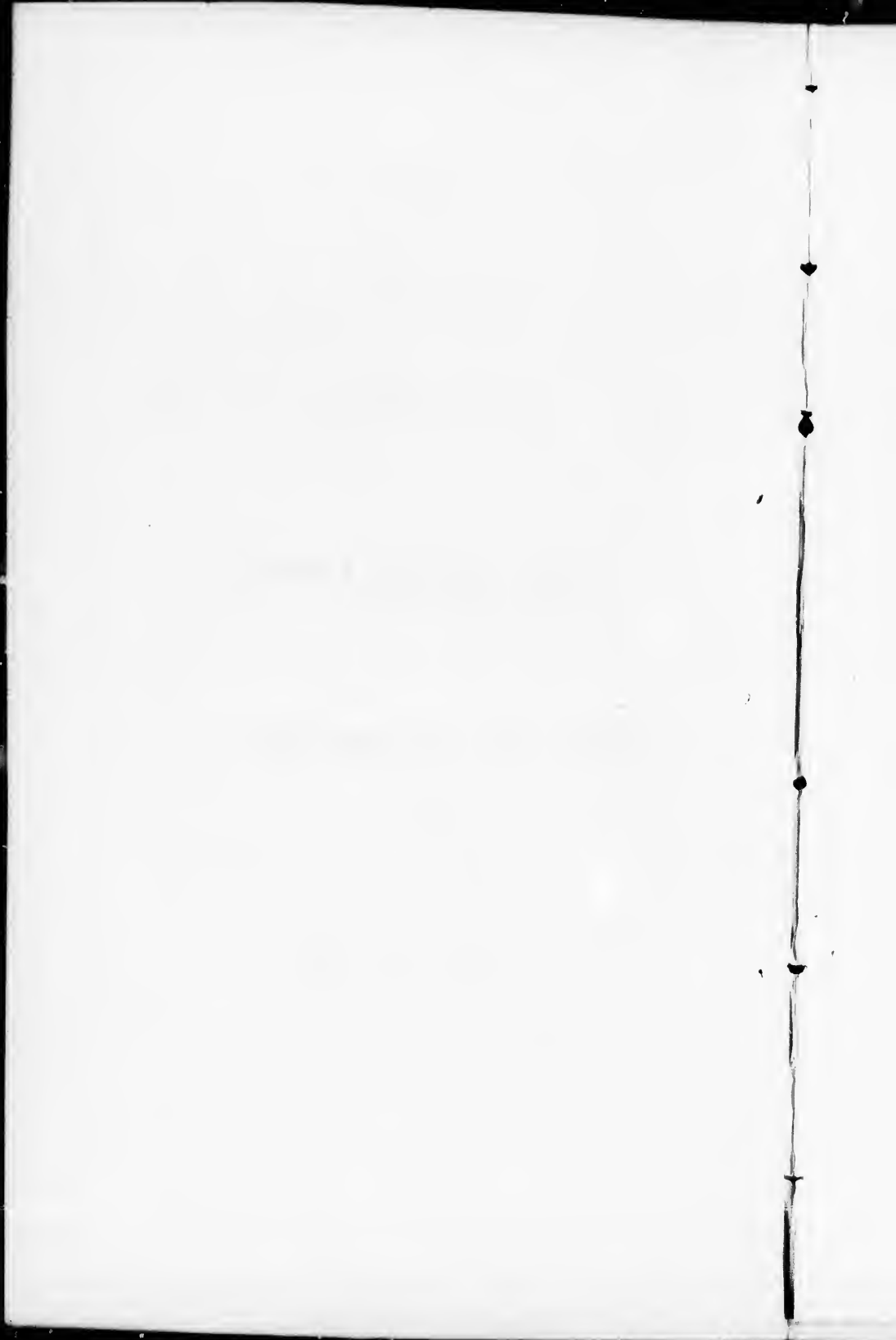
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THE
OPENING
OF
THE NAVIGATION
OF
THE ST. LAWRENCE.
CONSIDERED.

NOVEMBER 20TH, 1828.



*The Opening of the Navigation of the St. Lawrence.
considered.*

November 20th, 1828.

THIRTY years since the Island of Cuba, or Port of New Orleans, was deemed by not a few essential in the English Scale, to counteract the influence which the United States would one day exercise in relation to British supremacy on the ocean ; the present trade of the Western States, and great extention of the United States was not then in view, the trade by the Mississippi, it may be stated, will in a few years out run the most extravagant estimate, notwithstanding the efforts which are making by the States of New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, by means of their canals and rail-roads now in progress, to draw part of the commerce from its natural outlet, the Mississippi, through these Atlantic States. Such efforts are by artificial means, and are onerous, clogged with many obstacles, and will entail heavy and unavoidable imposts. If it is so important an object to the Atlantic States, to draw a portion of the Western commerce, through their artificial ducts, what should be the policy of his Majesty's Government, when they look at the map and perceive that the great British outlet by the St. Lawrence, washes a lake and river Navigation of about four thousand miles, running into the Western States, and reaching towards the rocky mountains? As it is deemed so important by the States to incur so much expense in making Canals and rail-ways to obtain a portion of the trade, is it not worth

serious reflection on the part of his Majesty's Government, to consider how far British interests may be promoted by opening the Navigation of the St. Lawrence to the Western trade of the United States? The subject should be taken in a two-fold light; politically, and commercially—and first politically.

May we not view Quebec as possessing all the advantages which the Politicians to whom I referred allowed to New-Orleans, provided the navigation of the St. Lawrence should be thrown open? The States of Vermont, New-York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, to them I might add Kentucky and Tennessee, by means of the canals now in progress, would all become deeply interested in the free navigation of the St. Lawrence. Far be it from me to adopt the Michavelian policy of cherishing distinct interests between the States, in order to promote British interests, on the contrary, my aim is to perpetuate peace by giving them an interest in the navigation of the St. Lawrence, which would be destroyed by a war, as it cannot be understood by any but by such as have been resident in the United States, what an amazing influence a small interest, cast by a judicious policy into the scale of any party, can produce on the public measures of the Republic, but setting apart any considerations tending to keep alive British interests in a people not subject to the crown of England, I will endeavour to show that the opening of the trade of the St. Lawrence is a measure fraught with interest to Canada, and to the British Empire: and here an objection may be stated by such as will allege that

the opening this trade would create a school for navigators inimical to British interests, who would be ready to unite in conquering and separating Canada from England. Results of a character quite opposite to this doctrine may be expected, when the navigation of the River is opened, as every man whose trade would lead him to the West, would become interested in every measure tending to preserve it open, and, as has been hinted at, hostile to what would interfere with, or interrupt it.

Let the Americans bordering on, or connected with the lakes and river, feel they have an interest in the open trade of the river, and the general government of the United States will find it difficult to enter into a war so long as we possess Quebec, thereby wielding such power of checking or promoting the interests of their commerce; nor will they readily support any President, or any measures which may endanger their commercial prosperity. But to leave these high and momentous questions to the statesman, it may be fitter to meet the objections which will flow from the adoption of the proposed measure.

There are some who fear that the trade would be chiefly carried on by Americans, and that French and China goods would be introduced into Canada. That such might be introduced into the United States by that channel, in consequence of the high tariff lately passed in the States is probable, but the measure contended for can excite no fears as to a contraband trade injurious to British interest. In fact, the danger arising from smuggling would rest entirely with the States. But

if the British merchant enjoyed the same privileges in the China trade as the American merchant, great advantages would arise to the port of Quebec, separate from the duties that the introduction of these foreign articles would supply to the Colonial treasury.

The narrow and selfish policy of the East India Company, though driven to send teas to Quebec, still operates on those arrangements, which private merchants would obviate, not only in the selection of teas suitable to the market, but also to sell them at such a rate as would make the market of Canada assume that position as to the United States, which the latter lately possessed in relation to the Colonies; viz. the warehouse for the supply of their teas, and India manufactures.

Another cause of apprehension, is the admission of American produce or manufacture into Canada. This objection could only be made by those ignorant of the trade, as the protecting duties and charges being equal to 50 *per cent.* on the importation of manufacturers into the States, which American manufacturers deem inadequate to enable them to compete with the British in the United States: in fact there is no article of consumption in the Canadas but what may be afforded by the British much lower than by the American manufacturer, and by thus opening the navigation British manufactures can and will find their way into the heart of the United States. Did clearer views prevail as to freedom of commerce, there is no part of the empire where it could be exercised with more effect for the advantage of the British manu-

facturer and shipping interest, than in Canada. In the opening of the trade I would propose to confine the Americans to carry to the sea the produce of their own soil only, and to bring up such articles only as were to be landed in their own ports.

In like manner British vessels should alone convey to the ports in the United States, on the St. Lawrence, or Lakes, such articles as are supplied by Canada. The policy of admitting American vessels to the navigation of the Canada canals, under the above restrictions, is further evident, as enriching the Province by the transit, and the consequent expenditure thereon, but by such concession on the part of his Majesty, a corresponding arrangement might be looked for in opening the canals of the Union to British boats on the same terms to his Majesty's subjects, as the citizens of the United States should enjoy in passing of the British canals, as such facilities would enable the colony to convey, by the Erie canal, to Jamaica, the flour, pork and beef of their market, and in return bring back rum, molasses, and salt from the Bahamas, so essential for curing provisions for the West India markets. The flax seed, also, which could be raised in large quantities in Upper Canada, for which is paid annually to the United States, £150,000 *stlg.*, could be sent to Ireland by the same route; for the want of which privilege the growth of that article has not been cultivated, as the late opening of the St. Lawrence precludes the shipment until at a season too far advanced beyond the period of sowing that crop in Ireland.

The writer of these observations has fully considered an arrangement to guard against any abuse of the privilege by either parties in the proposed trade, as it respects smuggling, which it is unnecessary to set forth at present, as also to guard against the vessel or boats of either carrying other than the produce of, and for their respective countries. These he is prepared to communicate; indeed, he sees in the measure of a regulated free port in Canada, as it respects the products of France, China, and other countries, consequences of such vast magnitude, and of such a bearing on our manufactures and shipping, that he prefers detailing them in a separate article.

CHATHAM.

