

Notes in reply to the answer of The Honorable The Chief Commissioner of Public Works, to the Statements placed into his hands by The Honorable The Attorney General for Lower Canada, rectifying the erroneous and unjust classifications of certain public Works, contained in the Report of The Commissioners laid before The House of Assembly during the last Session.

The Chief Commissioner admits that there is error in his Report with reference to the following Works.

Survey of Lake Champlain	£ 382
Statistics for the Roads between Duke and Halifax	185
Survey for the Rail roads between Duke and Halifax	6322
Establishment at Gross He	3415
	£ 10,332

The difference between The Chief Commissioner of Public Works and the framer of the Statement referred to is this, that the latter deducts this sum from the unproductive works of Lower Canada & puts it in the Class of The Provincial Works whilst the former (The Chief Commissioner) divides it equally between Upper & Lower Canada.

If the Chief Commissioner had so divided this sum in his Report as he now proposes in his answer it is probable that nobody would have objected to it; inasmuch as in the one case or the other the burthen was equally borne by both sections of The Province, as it properly should be, since that Expenditure which is of a general Character does not interest one section more than it does the other; and it is precisely because that Expenditure should be so viewed that the framer of the Statement is still of opinion that his Classification (as a Classification) appears to him more correct than the one proposed by The Hon. The Chief Commissioner; The proposition, however, of The Chief Commissioner, attains the desired object, quite as effectually as the proposition contained in the Statement which is very clear, and which can surely give no ground to believe that any design existed to charge this Expenditure exclusively against Upper Canada.

The Chief Commissioner persists in considering the deepening of Lake St. Peter as a Local work; his opinion on this point seems to be irrevocably fixed.

In appropriating upwards of Three Millions of the Treasury of the People of Canada, for the amelioration of the Navigation of our internal waters, the Legislature must have had in view the General welfare of the inhabitants of the ~~immediates~~ of the Country without distinction from one Extremity of it to the other. If the Legislature had voted merely the amount necessary to open Canals of a depth of five feet, with corresponding restricted dimensions the cost would not in all probability have amounted to one half of the sum appropriated; and the Inhabitants of Upper Canada might have taken down their produce to Montreal and have returned with their Goods & Merchandise, quite as easily through such Canals as through Canals constructed on a scale of greater magnitude. But Canals of these dimensions would not have been considered sufficient, something more was required, Ten feet water was not considered too much for the depth of the Canals and therefore the whole Province was called upon to contribute towards the construction of Works on a scale that could only benefit a portion of its inhabitants; consequently in the Year 1811 large sums of money were appropriated by an act of the Legislature for the improvement of the inland water communication, and other ameliorations styled Provincial Works, of which the Welland and St. Lawrence Canals, were the most conspicuous.

However under the same Act and Head ("Provincial Works") a sum of £4500 was granted for the deepening of Lake St. Peter; the Legislature had doubt thinking that whilst facilities were given to the inhabitants of the Western portion of the Country to transport their produce in vessels of large tonnage, the inhabitants of the Eastern section might equally be entitled to improve their water communication so as to enable vessels of a larger tonnage to reach as far as Montreal. There was no distinction made at the time between one portion of the Works or the other; and after a lapse of ten Years, it is not a little surprising to find, when a settlement of accounts is attempted to be made between the two sections of the Province, that recourse is had to means by which the above grant is declared to be a "local unproductive Work, substituting a

imaginary classification for that which the Law has clearly Established.

Truly, it seems impossible, that the Chief Commissioner, if he will but take the trouble of reconsidering the subject, should not come to the conclusion that the Classification of this item as shown by the Statement is the only true and legal one, that can be made.

The Hon: Commissioner is in error with reference to a certain Classification which he supposes was adopted by his predecessors in the Commission of Public Works. The Report of the Commissioners for the Year 1848 contains a detailed Statement of all the public Works, their cost and their revenue, describes their nature and points out the localities in which they have been constructed - but nothing more;

In this Report the Commissioners have entered largely into details, and gave in a tabular form all the information which their time and their occupations permitted them to collect. They confine themselves to laying before the Public all that related to matters of fact as concerned their Department, but studiously avoided the adoption of any Classification calculated to excite discord in whatsoever quarter; they left to the public the province of drawing inferences; and it is to be regretted that the Report for the Year 1849 had not done so likewise.

If the Burlington Bay - Canal is to be considered a Provincial Work, the Harbor of Montreal ought equally at least to be so; for, if the Burlington Bay situated in a sort of Cul-de-sac, at the Western Extremity of Lake Ontario about 30 miles out of the great line of the St. Lawrence communication, can be considered as a Provincial outlet, Montreal, as the head of the transatlantic navigation, at the foot of the Rapids and lying at the junction of the Ottawa with the St. Lawrence, the former stream flowing for Hundreds of Miles thro' a vast and fertile territory, Montreal surely has far greater claims to be so considered. On the other hand if both those Ports are to be considered with reference to Revenue, Montreal again enjoys a great superiority over its rival, since this Year not only has the Harbor of Montreal yielded more than the interest of the Money laid out in its improvement, but it has produced

of £4,000 over & above the Interest.

With regards to the works on The River Trent referred to by The Hon: Chief Commissioner they may safely be thrown into the class of those unfortunate failures of which there are too many instances in The Province, and which are profitable only to a few speculators; had they figured in The Chief Commissioners Classification, as Provincial Works, The undermentioned works in Lower Canada, of which no account was taken in the copy of the Statement presented to The Chief Commissioner, might have been inserted, as a set-off and would have more than balanced the Item of Works on The Trent.

Touching that class of Works upon which tolls are levied, although to no considerable amount, it is difficult to explain why they have been classed in the Category of non-productive works in Lower-Canada.

Statement above referred to

Cascades & Coteau du Lac Roads	£	20,374	15	1
Chambly & Granby Roads		22,600	"	"
S ^t . John's & Spicers Corner Road		9,600	"	"
S ^t . Maurice				
Statissean	} Bridges — between Montreal & Quebec	33,923	13	5
S ^t . Anne				
Chateauguay	} Bridges South of the St. Lawrence	14,128	4	7
Aradok				
Godfric				
Béancour				
Rivière du Chêne				
Etchemin				
	£	98,620	13	4

Let this however be as it may, it is gratifying to find that The Chief Commissioner disclaims any design of having drawn an unfavorable contrast between the two Provinces, and that if error has arisen, it is purely accidental. And with respect to the works enumerated under the head of 2nd Class for Upper Canada in the Commissioner's report, the following admission contained in the answer of The Chief Commissioner to the Statement already alluded to, is equally satisfactory. Especially as that item is one of the most important of the whole matter at issue "With regards to the 2nd Class, it cannot apply with justice to that report inasmuch as they were not then sold, but will of course be noticed on the coming report when the entire loss the Public will sustain by those local Local Grants will be known."