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The World's Columbian Water Commerce Congress

CHICAGO 1893.

WATER COMMERCE

THE PROPOSED WATERWAY FROM LAKE MICHIGAN TO THE MISSISSIPPI
RIVER, VIA THE ILLINOIS AND MISSISSIPPI CANAL.

BY

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The World's Coldest Water - Communist Congress

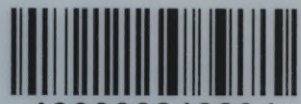
Chicago 1957

THE GREAT WATERWAY FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE MOUNTAINS
AND THE MOUNTAINS AND MOUNTAINS CANAL

ALONZO RYAN

Chicago, 1957

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WATER COMMERCE.

THE CONNECTION OF LAKE MICHIGAN AND THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER BY THE HENNEPIN CANAL, MAKING A CONTINUOUS WATER LINE TO THE ATLANTIC OCEAN—WHAT IT MEANS TO THE NORTHWEST.

The building of this waterway means higher prices for grain and produce to the farmer by making freight cheaper. This canal will carry wheat from the Mississippi river to Chicago for two cents per bushel, saving four cents per bushel. Suppose it carries 400,000,000 bushels of grain, or one-third of the crop of 1,200,000,000 bushels produced in the six states of Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Kansas and Nebraska, the farmers will be benefitted by this route to the extent of \$16,000,000 on this item alone, and on the 800,000 tons of anthracite coal used in this valley will at least be saved \$2.00 per ton on the through route from Buffalo, which would amount to \$1,600,000 more. Then on the item of salt a saving of \$200,000 could be effected.

So we might go on piling up statistics of saving until we would consume hours in their recital, but the reports of congressional committees, the able speeches of our senators and representatives in urging the necessity of the building of this canal, and the subsequent action of congress in making appropriations for building this great national waterway are replete with statistics which have been widely read, so I will desist; but it is safe to assert a grand total of \$20,000,000 as the yearly saving to the people of the Mississippi valley.

CAPACITY OF CANAL.

Did you ever stop to think what this canal can transport to

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Chicago, from the Mississippi river, in twenty-four hours, when it is completed and new propelling power applied to canals as it no doubt will be by the time this canal is in operation, pulling these boats along at a speed of eight miles an hour, landing them alongside of lake vessels in twenty-four hours after leaving the Mississippi with a cargo of 600 tons, or 20,000 bushels of wheat, at a cost of not over two cents a bushel (railroad rate is now six cents.) Suppose you place boats one mile apart or 180 boats loaded with wheat, that would mean 3,600,000 bushels transported in twenty-four hours from the river to lake Michigan. Turn these barges around with 600 tons anthracite coal each, or 100,000 tons in the fleet carried to the Mississippi in twenty-four hours at a cost of fifty cents per ton, as compared to present railroad rate of \$1.30 per ton saves eighty cents per ton, or \$72,000 on this one item alone between Chicago and the Mississippi river. Salt can be carried at ten cents per barrel as against present rate of thirty cents, or twenty cents from the works on the lakes to Davenport.

CONNECTIONS OF CANAL.

This waterway unites 5,000 miles of lake navigation with 5,000 miles of river. The importance of lake navigation to the cities of Chicago, Duluth, Buffalo and all lake points as well as to the whole northwest need not be recited here, it is a matter of knowledge to every resident in the great west.

WHAT OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER?

Some say its commerce has so declined that it has outlived its usefulness, but it is not so. To be sure great fine passenger steamers no longer plough its waters as in days of yore, but it stands there as the great regulator of freights more powerful than the Inter-State Commerce Committee, and the government recognizing its value in that respect has expended large sums of money and successfully improved it as by building

a canal around the Keokuk rapids, capable of floating the largest Mississippi steamer, or fleet of barges, or great rafts of lumber in the lowest stages of water, where twenty years ago there existed a complete blockade at low water. The upper or Rock Island rapids, at the location of the National Arsenal, have been made an open waterway over which pass boats and rafts at lowest water ever known, thus removing the objection made by those advocating other than the final location of the Hennepin Canal. Entering the Mississippi almost half-way between St. Louis and St. Paul, at a point opposite Davenport, Iowa, this canal will prove the wisdom of its location when it is in operation.

The value of the lumber traffic alone on the Mississippi river to the people of that valley is a sufficient recompense for all that has been spent on the river by the government. There are eighty mills on the main river, sawing 800,000,000 feet of lumber daily, employing 16,000 men, representing a capital of \$20,000,000. On the Mississippi and its tributaries there are 200 mills sawing lumber, the greater part of which is floated down the river, employing 100 steamboats in towing these great rafts to their destination. There passed the Rock Island bridge alone during the season of 1892, 756 rafts, 200 barges lumber and logs, containing 2,500,000,000 feet of lumber valued at \$250,000,000.

ANOTHER OBJECTION ANSWERED.

It has been asserted that freight could not be brought up stream to this canal any great distance, the answer to that has been made and that too by a Railroad Company, the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway has for three years been transporting 700,000 oak ties, enough to equip 300 miles of road, to the Mississippi River at Cape Girardeau by rail, thence by barges up the Mississippi to Davenport, a distance of 500 miles against the stream. Why? Simply because it could be done cheaper than any railroad on earth could haul them.

WHAT WATERWAYS LACK TO MAKE THEIR SUCCESS COMPLETE
IS SPEED.

The prime cause of the decline of water commerce other than lake commerce was its slowness. The passenger trade left the rivers because of the swiftness of railways, the freight left the canals because it was hauled too slowly and capacity of canal boats too small, but with enlarged canals and power no doubt soon to be successfully introduced by electricity or cable drawing large quantities of freight in quick time, success is assured. Let this Congress urge the encouragement and application of these new modes of propelling power and the problem of cheap transportation will be solved, and the time is fast approaching when this country will need all its modes of transportation to move quickly and cheaply its vast products brought out of the soil, the mines, and the manufactory.

PROGRESS OF CANAL TO DATE.

I have personally inspected the work done to this date and find great progress has been made, the four and one-half miles from the Mississippi River to the open river navigation on Rock River will be nearly done by the time snow flies and if it had not been for the floods and the failure of some contractors to perform their work, this twenty-seven miles of canal and river navigation would have been ready for navigation in early spring. As it is they expect to complete it next summer, and Engineer Wheeler, under Capt. Marshall, U. S. A., is doing a large amount of work by day labor and working a double turn of men. He has collected a valuable and useful plant of machinery along the canal and is pushing the work as fast as possible and has enough of the appropriation left to enable him to do so for some time to come.

DAVENPORT, IOWA, July 28, 1893.

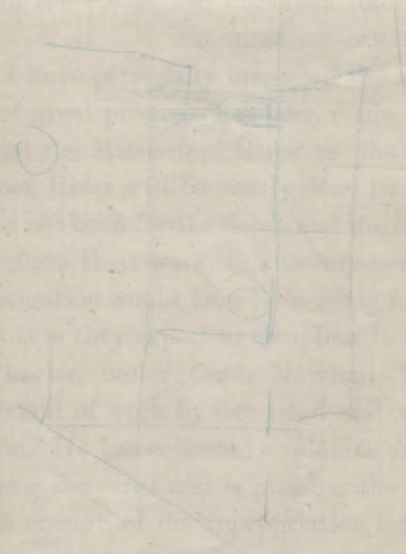
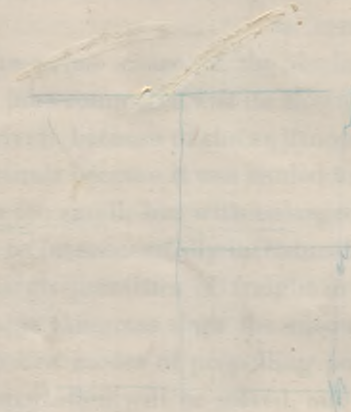
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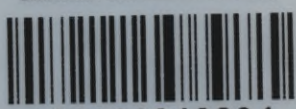
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