

Taking the new Custom House as a starting point, the general shipping trade is at present accommodated along the river front to say "l'Anse des Mères," from which point the various Coves provide for the particular wants of the Timber Trade with which it is, doubtless for well considered reasons, not the intention, apparently, of the Commissioners to interfere. To suppose that the intention of the Harbour Commissioners is to provide accommodation for the existing trade, must also involve the supposition that there is no existing accommodation whatever, and that having gravely decided that the splendid natural advantages which the river front affords, and the excellent facilities for harbour accommodation which many points between the Custom House and l'Anse des Mères possess, are utterly inadequate for their purposes, the Commissioners have come to the determination of establishing a new harbour altogether, and that they have but merely to excavate the mouth of the St. Charles some twenty feet, and build wharves, warehouses and elevators, to relieve the overcrowded business part of the city altogether, of the nuisance of ships with its attendant annoyances, and remove it to a proper distance eastward of the Custom House—where it shall be connected with the city only by a drawbridge. Now, unfortunately for this theory, it happens that our merchants have been in the habit of congratulating themselves that the shipping is, by the present arrangement of the harbour, brought as near as is possible to the centre of that trade to which it administers, and, however perfect the accommodation of the Commissioners might be, they might not see the enormous advantages of its being situated a mile or two distant from their doors, of its being afforded on an extensive arrangement of wharves, some 100 feet or so wide, surrounded by water or mud on all sides and exposed to all vicissitudes of weather, and of its been approachable only by a "suitable" drawbridge, which, practically speaking, must be open half the day to allow the numerous batteaux and schooners with hay, bricks, boards, deals and firewood, to avail themselves of the facility of the South Channel of the Little River. True, according to foreign representation, our Quebec merchants are the last men in the world to see their own real interests, but as the Harbour Commissioners have not yet contemplated any improvement by condemning them as useless, and substituting for them an importation of the right kind of men from Montreal, the Welland Canal, or some other model seaport, (for most certainly if the St. Charles be "the right place," these are "the right men,") I am sadly afraid, in the meantime, that the cautious prudence and the sincere regard for his own business convenience, of every mercantile man in the city will materially prevent the success of any such intended scheme of the Commissioners, and stamp their attempt to improve matters an extensive failure.