

and Boston we have the greatest competitors, as, neither Montreal, Quebec, nor Portland can at present offer the facilities and accommodation; but the saving in time, however, effected by the Grand Trunk route must attract attention to Montreal and Quebec, and doubtless ere long the cities will become the great granaries of North America during the winter months.

The recent reports of a commission, composed of three most distinguished engineers in the United States, on the harbour of Montreal as the point of interchange of ocean and inland traffic, conclusively show that the St. Lawrence valley is destined to become the highway of the commerce passing between the two hemispheres, as beyond all question it possesses the best railway and water communication between the east and the west; and it is clear that Montreal and Quebec enjoy geographical advantages not possessed by any other ports for the delivery of western produce for European markets, and for the consumption of the eastern States of the Union. In the reports referred to I find the following interesting observations bearing on this subject:—

“The trade of the port of New York has been long well matured. For a great length of time no burthensome restrictions have existed to discourage her commerce. She has been to all the nations of the world a free port, and her position as regards the inland trade of the lake basins, which her canals have controlled since 1830, aided by a harbour of easy access, has made her familiarly known to the ships of all nations. Her connections with the interior are equally well developed, and a long experience has systematised her forwarding facilities and reduced the cost and charges of transportation from the interior to a minimum. Vessels coming to the port from sea are sure of a cargo of some kind home or coastwise to other ports. In the same way steam vessels and canal barges from the interior lakes and rivers, as well as coastwise, can always count on a return of freight more or less from that accumulation of foreign merchandise which is delivered at New York to meet the consumption of the Western States, of the State of New York, and of a considerable portion of the Province of Canada. At the Port of New York every facility, growing out of a long and large experience in both the interior and the ocean trade, is thus well understood. The port of Montreal, on the contrary, is thus far very deficient in similar advantages. It is but nine years since the restrictive laws of Great Britain as regards foreign shipping entering the Gulf of the St. Lawrence were removed. Previous to that time no foreign vessel entered that port. The trade was entirely carried on in British bottoms, and was hampered with conditions which cramped and depressed it, increased the costs of foreign stuffs, and, so far as any commercial regulation can produce such effects, suppressed the commercial capabilities of the provinces and discouraged mercantile enterprise. This exclusion of all foreign vessels kept that large portion of the commercial marine, including all United States' ships, ignorant of the navigation of the Gulf.

“The entire absence of lights until very recently, gave to the imperial policy a tendency to discourage a wide knowledge of its waters, and gave to the navigation a bad name which it was the interest of the few ships that monopolised its trade to increase. In 1851 there was not one light-house on the North Shore between Quebec and Belle Isle, a distance of eight hundred miles; add to this that the canal improvements on the St. Lawrence have been but recently completed, and that Montreal could not command an interior trade of any consequence until these were, not merely in regular operation, but well known to shippers on the lakes, and the resources and convenience of the port