

cents; 7 cities range from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 cents, and 2 are  $2\frac{1}{2}$ . It should be mentioned that, exclusive of railway securities, which the Treasurer justly thinks not very valuable, indeed most of them have been in the form of bonuses, there are available assets to the amount of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  millions, leaving the actual indebtedness about \$17,000,000. There is in our humble judgment some difficulty in arriving at a clear comprehension of the value of the assessable property. The estimate of \$1,200,000,000 is based, as we understand, on the assumption that in the country districts property is assessed at 60 per cent. of its real value, in cities at 75 per cent., and personally at 25 per cent. The actual assessed value is estimated at \$787,000,000, and the assessable property in the indebted municipalities at \$500,000,000. We notice that the *Globe* contrasts the \$500,000,000 of indebted municipalities with the aggregate of \$1,200,000,000, which we believe to be incorrect, as is also another statement in the same article, that the debt-burden necessitated in 1879 an average rate of a little less than a cent on the dollar, whereas at 6 per cent. interest about a quarter of a cent would be sufficient. The Treasurer stated the whole assessment receipts at \$7,872,461, and the average rate not quite a cent, giving, he added, \$787,000,000 as the assessed value.

#### CANAL COMPETITION.

The New York State engineer and surveyor, Mr. Horatio Seymour, jr., has submitted to the Legislature his annual report on the canals; the statistics to support his deductions have a significance that cannot be misunderstood. They show that the amount of freight transported on the water route of the State of New York has been greater than at any former period since its opening. Previous to this year, the largest amount ever carried was in 1861-62, and after that prosperous season the tonnage gradually decreased until in 1876 the amount was 1,745,320 tons, while this year the tonnage is 6,462,290. The tolls amounted to \$1,164,567.92, an increase of \$238,823 over the preceding year. The importance of maintaining the canals in the highest state of efficiency as regulators of freights and a check upon railroad exactions is strongly pointed out by Mr. Seymour. He says that railroads, by combinations, make rates to the seaboard against which the shipper would be powerless were it not for the water route; and as long as the Erie canal is secure, New York city will have a channel through which freight can be carried to it cheaper than to any competing point. Mr. Seymour urges the reduction of tolls to the

lowest possible point in order to enable the canals to maintain their position in face of the competition of rival ports, at the same time that the railroads are expending large sums in costly experiments. To cheapen transportation upon the Erie canal, the State Engineer suggests that the boats should be able to carry larger cargoes, and to bring this about the canal should be deepened. "If one foot of water is added to the depth of the canal by raising its banks, the present boats can carry fifty tons additional load, and the relation between the size of the boat and the size of the canal will not be disturbed. This increase in depth would enable the boats to carry one-fifth more cargo. At the present rate of carrying, it would cheapen transportation one cent a bushel, which would be equivalent to removing tolls. This plan of deepening the canal should recommend itself to the boatmen, because it requires no outlay on their part, the boats now in use having a capacity for fifty tons more than the present depth allows them to carry."

Preparations are general everywhere on the lakes to meet the competition of the improved Canadian canals, which the American newspapers acknowledge to be the finest system of inland navigation in the world. Lake vessels have grown to monster dimensions, and are still growing larger. In the spring of 1879 and 1880 crafts of 2,000 tons each were launched, and the coming spring of 1881 will witness the launching of vessels of 2500 and 3,000 tons. Shipbuilding is very active on the lakes this winter. There are now from forty to fifty vessels on the stocks, all of which are 2,000 tons each and upward. As vessels are thus becoming larger, the American Government looks to the deepening of the rivers and canals connecting the lakes, and the city authorities in Chicago, Buffalo, Cleveland, &c., are ready to expend money liberally in dredging the inner harbors. Large vessels are now the rule. That large vessels can carry their cargoes cheaper than small ones is seen by the fact that vessels carry grain from Chicago to Buffalo for one half the cost of carrying from Buffalo to New York, although the former distance is twice the latter.

The success obtained by the port of Montreal in the last two years in the competition for the export trade in cereals is shown by the percentage of the whole trade belonging to each of the five ports on the Atlantic.

	Receipts at		Exports from	
	1879.	1880.	1879.	1880.
New York, per cent.	49.1	51.1	49.6	50.5
Boston, "	9.9	10.	6.3	7.7

Philadelphia, p. ct.	14.2	14.3	13.1	12.6
Baltimore, "	20.1	17.1	22.2	18.6
Montreal, "	6.7	7.5	8.8	10.6

The relative importance of Montreal cannot fail to increase when the enlargement of the Canadian canals is completed, and we may judge of the future by what has already taken place. The competition of late years between Oswego and Montreal has fully established the fact that when commerce reaches Lake Ontario it is practically lost to the city and State of New York. The receipts of Western grain at Montreal have steadily increased during the past fifteen years, while those at Oswego have as steadily decreased, as may be seen in the following statements of receipts at both ports during the years 1866 and 1879:

Montreal.		Total Grain.		Oswego.	
1866.	1879.			1866.	1879.
6,690,704	18,897,159			14,637,170	7,810,656

If, from the receipts of Oswego, in 1879, we deduct 3,000,000 bushels of barley coming chiefly from Canada, scarcely 4,000,000 of bushels remain as receipts of western grain, showing that Oswego has lost three-quarters of its Western trade, while that to Montreal has increased three-fold, and the completion of the Welland canal instead of arresting the diversion will facilitate it, as the attractions of the Canadian route cannot be overcome. The early completion of all the projected improvements of our inland navigation ought to be impressed upon the Government in order to secure at once the advantages accruing to our port, and to forestall the competitive efforts of the State of New York.

#### SIR ALEXANDER GALT'S LECTURE.

The lecture delivered before the Colonial Institute in London on the 26 ult. by Sir Alexander Galton "Canada's Future" has been published at length, and is well worthy of perusal. We noticed with great satisfaction that Sir Alexander Galt expressed the opinion that it is unwise to discuss the future of the Dominion with reference to possibilities that may never arise. Adverting to Mr. Wm. Clarke's article advocating annexation, he held that no one can foretell the ultimate destiny either of Canada or the United States, and he undertook to show that at this moment the interests of Canada are "most intimately blended with those of Great Britain." It would be wholly impracticable, in the brief notice which we are able to give to it, to do justice to a lecture which ought to be generally read, and which we hope will be published in pamphlet form. The lecture was, of course, prepared chiefly for British and