

importing that are at all interested in the improvement. It is indeed quite possible that, considering Canada as a country by itself, without geographical connections, the expense of enlarging the canals may be held to be unwise and unnecessary. No one disputes that all the commercial requirements of Canada are met by the St. Lawrence canals. To argue on a merely Canadian interest—such, for instance, as the depth of the Lake Erie harbors—is to impose a limit in no way to be recognized. The whole question must be considered, and all the peculiar characteristics borne in mind, for the solution to be just and right.

Every nation has some particular excellence or product to constitute its wealth, and the development of this speciality is the source of national wealth. Canada is a grain growing country, and by the wealth obtained through its products, manufactures are year by year established. The interests of Canada proper are not Dominion interests, they are Provincial interests, and as such must be considered. These Provincial peculiarities of Canada, are distinct from those of the Lower Provinces. Canada has no coal; iron she does not manufacture, because it can be imported cheaper, and the millions of Canada would never submit to pay dearly for that necessary of life, iron, which they can now get cheaply, so that a few thousand people in the iron trade might prosper. The mining operations are generally limited and not over successful. We may go through the list, and we find that the wealth of Canada is in grain and lumber, and that on these industries all other sources of wealth are engrafted. But we have still untouched the real strength of Canada. It is her geographical position. What coal and iron and manufactures consequent on them, are to other countries, Canada possesses in the St. Lawrence and its connections. By the St. Lawrence only, is the high road to the ocean for the western lakes, and it is in the development of this route that the true policy of Canada lies. As it is, the Welland Canal is supported by American commerce. Thus, in 1867, of 5,405 vessels passing through the Canal, 2,212 were American. And of vessels passing from one Canadian port to another, there are only 835, with a tonnage of 127,318; the total tonnage being 993,938—the difference, of course, being American trade. During this period the receipts for tolls were \$172,486, while the receipts on the St. Lawrence Canals were \$69,572 only. Is it possible to turn the western trade by the St. Lawrence? About one-tenth only of the amount now reaches Montreal.

If it be a fact that vessels can pass more economically and with greater rapidity by

the St. Lawrence to Boston and New York, and if a moderate increase in the development of the St. Lawrence will so improve the navigation that a class of vessels will be constructed suitable to the waters, and adapted to the trade, we may look to see the route followed in preference to that by the Erie Canal, the one other outlet. We have thirteen millions of dollars, in round figures, expended on the St. Lawrence and Welland Canal; the net revenue is about half per cent. The total revenue of all the Canadian canals in 1867 was \$84,665; surely some effort is needed to make these works remunerative, and the only effort favorable is to adapt them to American requirement. The whole country is turning its attention in this direction. In Montreal, the Ottawa Canal is abandoned as a commercial project. It has quietly died out. All that is asked is the improvement of the Ottawa between Montreal and the capital, and as settlement goes west, that the works necessary to make the river navigable, to promote settlement according to the capacity of the river should be carried on from time to time, as necessity dictates. The Georgian Bay scheme is condemned by every man who can understand a true commercial policy; after costing a fabulous sum, it would be of benefit only to Oswego, and is consequently not in accordance with the interests of Canada. Of the Caughnawaga Canal it may be said that its influence disappears if the Whitehall Canal cannot be enlarged. The lateral cut to the Welland is a scheme of speculation that the government never can countenance. If there be any principle beyond dispute, it is that the government should hold the control of every foot of Canadian water. What, indeed, could be more embarrassing than a private company standing forth to interfere by an arbitrary system of tolls with the policy of the government. Indeed, if such a power now existed, it would be imperative on the part of the government to obtain it at almost any cost. The idea, therefore, of granting such a position to a private company is preposterous. There is no one single public man who could advocate it, that is, a public man backed by ministerial responsibility. The consideration of the Bay of Quinte Canal, is a side issue—a mere distant measure of no provincial account. The ground, therefore, is perfectly clear for examination of the St. Lawrence. The government should lose no time in appointing competent men to examine into the question, in connection with the cities of the western lakes. From all that can be learnt on the subject, the writer believes there is much exaggeration as to the extent of effort required to improve the river itself in its navigable parts. Take the St.

Clair flats for instance. The cost to the Province has been \$70,485, and there is now a channel of 5,600 feet long, with 12 feet water, and 300 feet wide. It is true that the United States government contributed to the cost (Pub. Work Report, 1867, pp. 41 and 42.) An examination of the difficulties in the river would soon establish their character, and then the question of cost would at once lead to the practical view of what ought to be done. Then, as to navigation itself, the assertion that sea going vessels cannot navigate rivers, is one of these general propositions utterly without weight. To make it of the least importance the reasons and causes require investigation. Since the introduction of propellers, the whole theory of navigation has been changed. Moreover, there has been a practical refutation in the passages of "Her Majesty" from Toronto to Halifax; indeed, in the Allan steamers themselves, which sail from Quebec to Montreal, and if the channel were appropriate could equally go on to Chicago.

All the travel passing through Western Canada, to the ocean, will be of the greatest benefit to the Province. It is here that passenger travel would follow the railways, the Great Western and the Grand Trunk would participate in the increase of movement, while the Allan boats would receive the whole of the western trade—passing from the great lakes to Europe, each year increasing in volume. The propeller running from Chicago to New York and Boston would be a freight boat. The vessel running to Europe would likewise be for freight; she might carry some few passengers, like the sailing vessels of to-day, but the bulk of the traffic will take the larger Allan vessels, and deservedly so. It may be said that every interest will be benefited and that by the additional expenditure of about \$12,000,000, the amount invested in the Canals, and now unproductive, would be made to pay a revenue yearly to increase. Such is the writer's sincere belief. Certainly the American view of the case encourages this hope, and yet nothing is done by our own Government, in any way towards even an examination of the question. Possibly it may find a solution hereafter in political causes, and certainly one of the modes to force it upon public attention is fully to discuss the subject in all its bearings, so that the great body of the people may understand the true policy of which their interests demand. Such have been the objects with which the foregoing papers have been written, whether they will work their influence time only can show.

It is again rumoured that the Bank of Montreal has made overtures to the Bank of British North America for amalgamation.