

II. Papers on Canada and various Countries.

1. CANADA AS AN OUTLET TO THE OCEAN.

From the London Morning Chronicle.

As the discovery of the passage to India round the Cape of Good Hope completely changed the course of trade between Asia and Europe, so in our times on the North American continent we may witness a revolution of a character scarcely less important, which will render the ports of the St. Lawrence the main conduit of the produce of the north western States of the American Union, superseding the Erie Canal and the harbor of New York. The Canadians already speculate on the junction of the Atlantic and Pacific by a railway stretching from the St. Lawrence to Vancouver's Island, through British territory, and they are actually preparing to connect Lake Ontario with Lake Huron by a ship canal. They calculate on transporting to Europe the agricultural products of a million and a half of square miles, lying around the great lakes, with the region west and north-west, where all the grains and grasses are capable of growing luxuriantly, where flocks of sheep will yield rich fleeces, and fat beaves reward the enterprise of the graizer. The line of coast formed by the margins of the lakes is upwards of 4,000 statute miles, and the region above the lakes organized into the North-Western Territory of 1787, now embraces the states of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin, and it is proposed to divert the whole of the enormous and annually expanding trade of these vast countries through the channel of the St. Lawrence for shipment to Europe. Nor is the scheme visionary, but has many recommendations, among which relative distances are prime elements. The distance from Quebec to Liverpool is 475 miles less than from New York to Liverpool. Kingston, at the foot of Lake Ontario, is 125 miles nearer Liverpool than New York is. From Hamilton, at the head of Lake Ontario, is the same distance as from New York to Glasgow. From Lakes Ontario, Erie, and the southern point of Huron, is nearly a straight line to the ports of Great Britain, through the St. Lawrence and the Straits of Belle Isle.

The sagacity of Washington foresaw this possible revolution in trade. In writing to a member of the national legislature, he urges the policy of preventing "the trade of the western territory from settling into the hands of either the Spaniards or the British." "It," he observed, "either of these happens, there is a line of speculation drawn between the eastern and western countries at once, the consequence of which may be fatal. . . . If then, the trade of that country should flow through the Mississippi or the St. Lawrence—if the inhabitants thereof should form commercial connections which we know, lead to connections of other kinds, they would in a few years be as unconnected with us as are those of South America. It may be asked, how are we to prevent this?" In answer he recommends the extension of the inland navigation of the eastern waters, connecting them as nearly as possible with those which run westward; the opening of these to the Ohio; of those which extend from the Ohio to Lake Erie; and, these points accomplished, then he considered that his countrymen would not only draw the produce of the western settlers, but the peltry and fur trade of the lakes.

As soon as the war of independence had been brought to a successful termination, the citizens of the new republic desired to reach the unexplored territory of the west and utilise its natural resources. The plan proposed was the construction of canals, and Washington himself projected a plan which was to stretch to the west by ascending the Potomac. But this effort and some others failed, because public opinion was not sufficiently advanced, or because capital was wanting. At length the genius and energy of De Witt Clinton, whose name will ever be honoured as one of the eminent benefactors of the United States, conceived and executed the plan of the Erie Canal connecting New York with Buffalo, and by this channel American enterprise had access to the western territory. The canal is 363 miles in length and seven feet in depth. The original cost was 7,143,780 dollars, and the enlargement 12,989,851 dollars, being at the rate of £13, 865 sterling per mile. This truly magnificent work was commenced in 1817, and finished in 1825, and is remarkable proof of the spirit of population of the state of New York who then only numbered 1,300,000 souls.

The British Government, perceiving the value of internal trade to Upper Canada, constructed the Welland Canal, which connects the Lakes Ontario and Erie. The length of the main trunk is 28 miles; the junction branch to Dunville 21 miles, and the Broad Creek branch 1½ miles, making altogether 50½ miles. It is not sufficient for the traffic lying round Lake Erie, and now it is proposed to carry a ship canal from Ontario to Huron, a distance of 100 miles, by which the commerce of all the lakes would be brought into direct communication with the St. Lawrence. With equal spirit the merchants of Chicago are prepared to cut a canal 150 miles in length through the southern part of Michigan to avoid the dangerous navi-

gation of the St. Clair Flats, which connect Huron with Erie. The position of Chicago for commerce is most commanding. It is the principal trading part of Illinois standing on the south-western bend of Lake Michigan, at the head of navigation as regards the lakes. Its rapid advance is a wonder, for in 1833 the Red Indian built his wigwam on its site, and the stag free and fearless, bounded over its plains. Lake Michigan opens to Chicago the trade of the north and east, while the Illinois and Michigan Canal gives it the trade of the south and south-west. Traversing about 100 miles to the head of steamboat navigation on the Illinois River, it opens a water communication of 1700 miles to the Gulf of Mexico, and completes an inland navigation of 3200 miles to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, by way of lakes, the Canada canals, and St. Lawrence River; and also by way of the lakes, the Erie Canal, and the Hudson River, to the city of New York, a distance of 3100 miles. The country surrounding Chicago, a mixture of woods and prairies, diversified with gentle slopes and irrigated with numerous clear streams, is the most fertile and beautiful that can be imagined.

These rich territories demand an outlet to the ocean to avoid the heavy cost of transhipment, and this can be effected by the junction of the Ontario and Huron by a ship canal. Goods could then be conveyed from Chicago to Liverpool and Glasgow without breaking bulk, and the same vessels that carried the agricultural products of the Far West to Britain would be freighted back with our manufactures. By this route the Erie Canal and the trading emporium of New York would encounter a formidable rival, and the fears of Washington might be realized. On these combinations Canadian energy has fixed its attention, and is eager to seize the advantages that present themselves both by land and water, by railways and canals. The Grand Trunk Railway, with an ocean terminus at Portland, in the state of Maine, never frozen, and the Great Western Railway, are magnificent undertakings; but when the ice does not impede, a complete system of canals, giving a continuous passage from Chicago through the St. Lawrence, must bear away the palm. We are not writing of any distant future. All the facilities we have described are now available, and indeed many exist, for already a voyage has been made through the Lakes to Liverpool, through the Welland Canal, though the vessel was of moderate burden; but a ship canal from Ontario to Huron of ample depth would completely revolutionise trade. Such are the brilliant prospects dawning upon Canada, and such are the new markets which may be opened up to our manufacturing industry. The inauguration of a Conservative Government having released us from the turbulent rule of Lord Palmerston, we may hope to live in peace with our neighbors, and devote our thoughts and energies to the development of the useful arts, both in India, and throughout our colonial empire.

THE SURVEY OF THE BRITISH AMERICAN FRONTIER.—An expedition to survey the Oregon boundary of the British possessions from Vancouver's Island to Lake Ontario, across the Rocky Mountains, has been organised, and will sail on the 1st of next month for their destination via Chagres and across the Isthmus of Panama, thence by steam to the Gulf of Georgia, where the expedition will commence its labors by tracing the 49th degree of North latitude. The force consists of Lieutenant-Colonel Hawkins, R.E., chief commissioner; Captain Haig, R.A., chief assistant; and sixty-five non-commissioned officers of the Royal Engineers, who are surveyors, topographers, photographers, &c., and thirty Hudson's Bay axemen. The expedition will probably require from three to four years to perform their laborious and arduous services.

2. AUSTRALIAN PROGRESS.

Our readers will remember that there was held in London, during the month of January last, a very influential meeting to celebrate the foundation of the first Australian colonies. This was Port Jackson or Sydney Cove, as it is called by the Colonial Secretary. For a long time this province of New South Wales made small progress. Its principal inhabitants were the gentlemen sent by a willing country to Botany Bay. It was at the very ends of the earth, and laying aside the fact that the emigrating era had not arrived, there was this other fact, that nobody who was willing to leave Britain, cared to go so very far from home. Years passed and the antipodal colony was really unknown. It was a bourne which few travellers reached, and from which, we may believe, fewer still returned. It was not until 1813, that the colonists themselves begun really to know the country they lived in; for not till that date did they leave the sea coast and cross the range of hills behind them. Still, with the tenacity of their race, these courageous pioneers progressed, defying the old axiom, and making it read, "out of nothing something came." After the peace of 1815, when trade grew dull, and war no longer provided for a teeming population, men turned to look for other homes with more room and opportunity. We pass by the troubles and distresses which between thirty and forty years ago, sent not a few to Canada and reach 1830, when in every shipping town of Britain, newspapers and