

To these decided differences in favor of Montreal, it would only be fair to add 3d. per barrel for saving of time and of injury by double transshipment, making the balance in our favor about 1s. per barrel from Lake Ontario, and 1s. 8d. per barrel from Lake Erie. In regard to the carrying of wheat, our advantage will be still more remarkable. Every one knows how injurious it is to the quality of grain to have it long on board of river craft, and how desirable it is to save storage in Montreal, by loading cargoes direct from the barge into the seagoing ship, a mode of shipment which will be much facilitated. The expense also and loss of weight incurred on the Erie line by double transshipment give us still more decided advantages over that route; and we do not hesitate to avow our conviction that the grain of Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan will be sent by way of the St. Lawrence to Britain and the Continent, in vast quantities after the equalization of the English duties. There is one preliminary condition, however, to which we attach much importance. The monopoly of the carrying trade must be put an end to by the admission of foreign competition on our inland waters. We must be allowed to go to the cheapest market for ships as well as for every thing else. And if British ships must needs have 6s. per barrel for carrying flour in the middle of summer, the interests of the Province obviously require that we should be allowed to bring foreign ships from Boston or New York, to compete with them; and we must join the free trade party at home, in agitating the repeal of the English navigation laws, which now exclude all such competition. We believe that this freedom of navigation is almost essential to a successful competition with these ports, and as there is little or no "shipping interest" in Canada, we believe that the Province will be almost unanimously in favor of it.

We have not alluded to that great drawback on our foreign trade,—the early and dangerous closing of the gulf navigation. This circumstance creates so extravagant a charge for insurance subsequently to the 10th or 15th of October, that we apprehend the abandonment of later voyages; nor should we regret such a change, either on the ground of economy or humanity. A trade involving such a sacrifice of human life and so great a waste of property, for the sake of furthering a pitiful monopoly, is one that we should be glad to see the end of; and it is consoling to know that it will be abandoned without much, if any, loss to our trade. The compensation for its abandonment will be derived from the great improvements in our inland navigation. By means of these we shall be able, if necessary, to place the wheat crops of the remotest districts on the Lakes, on board ship here before the 10th October. We shall begin to ship earlier as we shall reach the earlier harvests of Ohio and Illinois, and we shall therefore be able to afford to finish earlier. Moreover the opening of a Railroad to Portland, of which there is a fair prospect, would place in our hands the supplying the Eastern States with vast quantities of provisions and bread-stuffs. We do not think that this road will be of much use as a means of shipment to England, but it will sufficiently remunerate its shareholders, and relieve our market in the fall, by giving us so large a trade as the supply of the Eastern States would furnish. The question of the comparative advantages of Quebec and Montreal we reserve for future consideration.

QUEBEC AND HALIFAX RAILWAY.

Amongst the various money votes of the late session of our Provincial Legislature, we know of none tending to further a more important undertaking than the appropriation for the preliminary survey of the country through which it is contemplated to construct a railroad connecting the St. Lawrence with the Atlantic;—the termini to be Quebec and Halifax. We do not regard this project as a mercantile speculation, but as a great national work,—as a work which, when completed, will form a close and indissoluble bond of connection between the North American Provinces, giving to their united efforts a moral power which their separate and isolated state of existence has hitherto debarred them from exercising. Nor can this strength in the Colonies be a source of weakness to the Mother Country—but directly the reverse. If Great Britain is to maintain her influence on this continent, it must infallibly be through the means of a confederacy of her Colonies acting in union, rather than through their disjointed and unconnected efforts. *Divide et impera* is no longer the rule of British colonial policy: that pernicious maxim has given place to a more enlightened doctrine; and to the Union of her Colonies she must now look as her strength and safeguard on this continent. Any measure, therefore, tending to cement that Union is justly entitled to, and will doubtless receive, the countenance and assistance of the British Government. Such a measure is the public work which forms the subject of this article.

We have already remarked, that it is not merely as a mercantile speculation that the Quebec and Halifax Railway must be viewed. Perhaps on that head we may entertain some doubts: that is, whether

the transport of goods along that line can for many years be calculated on as sufficiently extensive to re-pay any considerable portion of the interest on the outlay. On those general principles therefore, which govern the application of capital to commercial enterprise we should pause before we recommended such an undertaking; but in the gigantic scheme proposed, and so ably and zealously advocated, by Mr. Young, there are other considerations involved, of so momentous a character, as to throw into the shade the mere question of pecuniary advantage.

We have often heard political economists, and more especially that portion of them who advocate the doctrine of Free Trade, censured on the ground that their theories were too general to be locally or individually applicable, and that they, the Free Traders, like Anacharsis Clootz, who styled himself the representative of the whole human race, carried away by an Utopian project of extending the benefits of commerce to all mankind, lost sight of their own individual interest and that of their immediate locality or country.

We need not stop at present to prove at any length the utter groundlessness of such an aspersion; it suffices to answer that the basis on which the whole structure of the Free Trade theory rests is that Free Trade is what every individual, if left to himself, and studying his own interest, practices, and that he finds every restriction on that trade to be *pro tanto* injurious: now the principles which we derive from individual experience, we would apply to districts and to nations, in matters relating to agriculture, manufactures and commerce, because we believe them to be true and universally applicable. On this subject we are limited by no local considerations.

"No pent-up Utica contracts our powers;
For the whole boundless continent is ours."

But if on a question connected with commerce we are thus cosmopolitan in our views, it is far otherwise with us in questions which are ordinarily designated national, and which pertain to the strength and greatness of our country. To works having for their object the opening out and settling the uninhabited portions of the province, and increasing the facilities of intercourse between this and the adjoining provinces and the mother country, we hold that our Legislature is bound to give every aid consistent with a due regard to the practicability of the undertaking, and the financial ability of the country. We rejoice that they have consented to furnish their proportion of the expense necessarily to be incurred in prosecuting the survey of the contemplated line of railway; and should the result of the survey be found such as the gentlemen who have so patriotically, and so far successfully, urged forward the undertaking, anticipate, and should the sister provinces and the British Government take the proportion of the stock assigned to them, we trust that no narrow sectional views may be allowed to retard or impede its completion. The sum which is asked from us is small in comparison with the mighty advantages which we might reasonably calculate on deriving from such a work. What is £30,000 per annum for ten years in the scale, weighed with those advantages, even supposing that the whole sum for which this province is asked to become responsible should be required? If we glance through the vista of futurity the mind is bewildered by the contemplation of the benefits which will flow from the execution of such a work. Some, by no means all, of those benefits are enumerated in the truly eloquent address of Mr. Young to the Quebec meeting in January last—a speech which will be fresh in the memory of most of our readers, and it is therefore unnecessary to repeat them. For our own part, we estimate as by no means the least important result of the undertaking the colonial spirit of nationality which it will foster, and the want of which has been one of the causes of our weakness:

"Une patrie d'hier, n'a point de lendemain."

We may return to this subject on a future occasion. For the present, it suffices to express the satisfaction we feel at the cordial manner in which the question was met in our Legislature, and our hope that it may be the forerunner of other measures, having for their object the prosperity and aggrandizement of this and our sister provinces.

FREE TRADE A GREAT MORAL QUESTION.

In considering a great question, men are too apt to confine their views to one or two arguments, which they are led by some cause or other to regard as all-important, instead of taking the broad and liberal view which the subject really demands. And this has been particularly the case with Free Trade. We doubt, indeed, if any question was ever presented to the world involving so much the interests and welfare of the whole human family, that was argued on such narrow grounds. The great moral considerations have been very seldom alluded to by those who have taken on themselves the burthen of the battle.—The physical and social improvement of certain communities—the stimulating of human ingenuity in certain branches of trade—a keener appreciation of the comforts of life—these considerations have indeed been made part and parcel of the discussion; but here the enquiry has usually