

Lawrence for this Eastern trade, an immense amount of return freight could be secured for vessels, which, on any other route, would go back empty or in ballast. The iron ore, slate, marble, &c., of northern New York and Vermont, which are now shipped West at great trouble and expense, would furnish so large an amount of return freight by the St. Lawrence route as seriously to reduce the rate of freight bound either to Montreal, Quebec or the Eastern States, and give us far greater power to compete for the trade of the West, and the supply of the Maritime Provinces, than we now possess. I cannot do more now than touch on the important issues involved in this matter, and will, therefore, dismiss the subject, commending its careful consideration to all who are interested in the present and future prosperity of the Dominion, believing it to be a subject of the most surpassing and paramount importance.

MONTREAL, *2nd November*, 1876.