

Buffalo and Oswego being at present the chief entrepôts of the grain and provision trade upon Lakes Erie and Ontario—there being no inlet for it to the Eastern States by water East of the latter port, accounts in my judgement for the very limited quantity of through freight carried by the Northern Railway of Canada the past year.

In this connection I will submit the following which I find in the report of the sub-committee to the Committee of the Board of Trade of the City of Montreal, appointed for the reception of the delegates from the States of Illinois and Wisconsin, dated April, 1863. "Experience in the grain trade here (Montreal) goes to show that transshipment at the foot of Lake Navigation, from large steam and sailing vessels into river craft, is not only found to be an inconvenience, but is adopted by choice as the cheapest, most facile, and safest mode of delivering grain in our harbour. Vessels loading in the Upper Lakes, now rarely come below Kingston; there transferring their cargoes to barges, the largest class of which now used in the trade, measure 150 feet in length by 30 feet in width, draw 9 feet of water, and carry 22,000 bushels of wheat."

Whether such barges could be safely used upon Lake Ontario, I cannot undertake to say, but the saving in distance of 300 miles by the overland route, from Owen Sound to Toronto, as compared with the Saint Clair, Lake Erie and Welland Canal route, would, provided such barges can be used with safety between Toronto and Kingston, on the voyage to Whitehall, at the southern extremity of Lake Champlain, be sufficient to attract to your proposed Railway, some part more or less of the grain and provision trade of the West. The volume of that trade is now so large that twenty per cent of it would enrich both your proposed line and the "Northern."

There is however another trade, yet in its infancy, but destined in the near future to assume large proportions, which if the merchants and capitalists of this country are true to themselves, may be owned and controlled by them,—namely, that of Georgian Bay and the North-west, which will naturally seek Canadian lines of communication in its course to points east, and the seaboard.

The pine timbered lands in that extensive tract of country bounded by the north-east coast of Georgian Bay, must soon be broken into, and the lumber and timber taken to eastern markets.