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THE "LONDON TIMES" ON THE ST. LAWRENCE ROUTE AND SUBSIDIES TO OCEAN STEAMERS.

(From the Times Aug. 6, 1859.)

In most ages of mankind the destinies of States have depended on the track of commerce. Cities have been made and unmade, and kingdoms elevated or depressed, by simple and silent changes in the course of trade. The mighty ruins in Asiatic plains mean often nothing more than that the adoption of some new route by a line of caravans left a proud and stately emporium stranded and desolate. The ancient ports in the basin of the Mediterranean whose historical names arrest every traveller's attention have become what they are because commercial revolutions took away their shipping, and with their shipping their vitality. Venice, Lisbon, and Amsterdam have felt in latter days the ebb of trade, while its flow has been sufficient, as we see, to create in San Francisco, Singapore, and Melbourne such interests as in former days could never have been conceived. There was once a time, when the critical region of the world was India, and when upon the communications between that country and Europe the fortunes of intermediate States seemed permanently to turn. But India has now been compelled, if not to relinquish, at any rate to divide her pre-eminence. There is another region with more important commerce, though a less romantic history. Instead of the diamonds of Golconda and the silks of Bengal, we see the breadstuffs of Ohio and Michigan absorbing the expectations of Europe. The West is eclipsing the East,—all the more so because it is new, limitless, and inexhaustible. We may trade with America for centuries and yet find it more productive than India is now. That prodigious continent is a perfect nursery of States, and the link connecting the two worlds is strengthened by the fact that more goes to the commerce between them than gold and goods. We supply America with people. The tide of population, which from the earliest ages set in from the East, is now carried onwards to the West more marvelously than ever. It is transported across the Atlantic, and then again pushed to the western extremities of the new continent, until nothing but a second ocean separates it from those eastern highlands in which our race took its rise.

We are not indulging in these reflections without a practical object. At this moment the route of commerce far more important than that by which Augsburg or Bruges was left to rise or fall is trembling in a political balance. How are the products of Western America to reach the expectant consumers of Europe? By what track are the swarms of European emigrants to be carried into the spacious and fertile provinces of the West? Through what channels is this interchange of exports to pass? What cities are to be enriched; what States to be elevated; what nations to be aggrandized? There is a double choice before us. The alternative is Canada or the United States, and the rivalry for the noble prize has been gallantly maintained. Unfortunately, the fight is not a fair one, and England stands chargeable with unwittingly damaging the chances of that competitor whose interests she might naturally be expected to prefer.