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**The Journal of Commerce**

FINANCE AND INSURANCE REVIEW.

MONTREAL, AUGUST 17, 1877.

**MONTREAL TRADE REPORT.**

The report on the Trade and Commerce of Montreal, which has been recently issued, is unusually interesting, and more especially so from its being accompanied by a most valuable map of the Dominion prepared under the immediate supervision of Thomas C. Keefer, Esq., C.E., and which shows almost at a glance the great superiority of the St. Lawrence route, which connects, to use Mr. Keefer's language, "in the shortest possible distance, with the most capacious, speedy and economical mode of communication, the greatest food consuming country in Europe with the greatest food producing country in America." Mr. Keefer's map, published several years ago, established the superiority of the St. Lawrence route to the Western States of the Union, but the new map shows the great importance of our Pacific route in shortening the distance between Great Britain and China and Japan. We learn from the table of distances furnished by Mr. Keefer that the distance from Liverpool via Montreal, Victoria, B. C., and Yokohama to Shanghai

is 1022 miles shorter than by New York, San Francisco and Yokohama, and 1261 miles shorter than the routes from Southampton via the Suez Canal to Yokohama. A comparison of distances via Canada to Sydney, Australia, would likewise be considerably in favor of the Canadian route. Mr. Keefer suggests an enlarged reprint of the map and also a copy on a gigantic scale for the purpose of its being placed in the Paris Exhibition next year, and he further recommends that the Montreal Boards should represent to the Dominion government the importance of causing models to be prepared of the public works on the great Canadian water highways, including canal locks, timber slides and booms, to be sent likewise to the Paris Exhibition. Under the head of "Some of the Teachings of the Map" there is a great deal of most interesting information, and especially to those interested in the future prosperity of Montreal. It is particularly cheering at such a time of depression as that which exists at present to read the remarks, under the heading "The Position of Montreal on the Map," and especially the following under "Montreal in the Future."

"In addition to the magnificent water connection at the centre of which this city is located, Montreal is the point towards which will by-and-by converge great railway lines connecting the east with the west, and stretching out their iron arms into the North-West, only to be stayed by the waters of the Pacific; and it is believed that in the not far-off future, Montreal will become a central depot, whence will be distributed the products of the soil, seeking markets in New England, New York, and the Middle States, to meet the requirements of a greatly multiplied population.

To any one who is disposed to scrutinize and forecast the future of Montreal as the commercial emporium of the Dominion, the statement of progress in the following pages are suggested as elements in his reckoning. He might also consider what influence will be exerted upon the future of this city, when the harbor is enlarged and improved, when the suggestion of the Canal Commissioners (1871) will be realized, of navigation from the seaboard to the base of the Rocky Mountains,—when the millions of acres of rich agricultural land in the Saskatchewan Valley are peopled, and made to pour out their cereal treasures to be carried along the great water highways of the Dominion to the proper distributing point for the benefit of the teeming population of Canada and the United States,—and when the railways are completed, affording a direct communication with British Columbia via the Canada Pacific Railway. Having surveyed all the conditions and made his calculations, the investigator may then be able to formulate a destiny for Montreal, which those who are now most conversant with its present, and sanguine as to its prospective progress, would look upon with astonishment."

Under the head "Increasing Trade of the tonnage, distinguishing vessels arriving from sea from river craft, from 1857 to 1876, a period of twenty years, in which time the increase was 203.42 per cent. The largest tonnage was in 1872, '73 and '74. 1876 is about equal to 1871, but shows a decrease as compared with 1872 of about 11.8 per cent. The elevating capacity connected with the warehousing facilities in Montreal are given in detail. The storage capacity for flour equals 200,000 barrels and of grain 2,000,000 bushels, and these accommodations are in the closest proximity to the harbor, canal basins and track of the Grand Trunk Railway. The importance of the Intercolonial Railway, enabling exporters to pass merchandize at all seasons of the year through Canadian territory and thus avoid vexatious and expensive official obstacles and detentions in transit through the United States, is justly dwelt upon. The portion of the report which is devoted to the "Summary of Canadian Commerce and Industry" is, as usual, very full of valuable information. The British West Indian tariffs are published in detail, though the heading would lead it to be supposed that the foreign tariffs were likewise given. As we have had occasion to notice more than once on other occasions, the tariffs of the British West India Colonies are of no importance whatever to the exporters. They are strictly free trade tariffs, the duties being levied almost exclusively on articles which are not produced in the colonies. The duties are to a great extent levied on articles of food, such as beef and pork, fish, flour, meal, wheat, Indian corn, butter and lard, and there are no differential duties, so that all producers compete on equal terms. The Report contains a "Retrospect of the year 1876 relating to her trade in breadstuffs" which furnishes a good deal of interesting information to those engaged in that branch of trade. The last division of the report treats of the trade and commerce of Montreal in 1876 commencing with the business failures. Under this head we may notice that the number and amount of failures in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick is very much less in 1876 than in 1875, indeed Nova Scotia, both in number and amount, is lower than in any of the four years in which a comparison is instituted. Quebec is much larger than in 1873 or 1874, but lower both in number and amount than in 1875, while Ontario is much greater in 1876 than 1875. It is sad to find that, notwithstanding three years of depression, and the fact that the failures in Canada have been greater in proportion to the number engaged than