

not a mere visionary one, but a substantial difference of between 300 and 400 miles, the distance from St. Paul to New York exceeding that to Montreal by this amount. Nor is this all. Having reached Montreal we are 260 miles nearer Liverpool than we are at New York. Your correspondent of last week may well remark that "such a fact in the hands of Gould or Vanderbilt would make this the best paying road in America.

But it may be objected that a line of rail road to connect two places, however direct and short, may be useless if there is no traffic to pass over it. Let us look at this aspect of the question for a moment. First in reference to cattle. The export from Montana and Dakota is now simply enormous; it is believed that during this season upwards of 20,000 head will be sent down to the sea board from Montana alone. All this trade centres in St. Paul. Not only so, but *rangers* in Nebraska and even in Kansas are now finding it more profitable to drive their stock north in large herds and put them on the cars at St. Pauls and other northern stations, than to ship them at once on the Union Pacific. They thus save a great many miles of railway travel, which of course tells very much on the condition of the animals, not to speak of sending them through a cooler region. Now from Kansas alone upwards of 300,000 head of cattle were exported last year. Why should not the trade be diverted to the line we speak of? And if it might be so, what is the reason that we do not make determined efforts to get this road constructed at once. Surely none, except the fact that we Canadians seem to think it necessary always to talk about a thing for two or three years before doing anything. Were this line an accomplished fact, instead of shipping some twenty-four hundred head as we did last week, we might be exporting as many thousand.

And now in reference to grain, the rapidity with which the rich lands of Minnesota and Manitoba are being brought under cultivation is, as many of your readers know, quite unprecedented; and the scale on which wheat is now raised upon some western farms is to us almost incredible. For instance, Mr. Dalrymple, in Minnesota, had last summer 11,000 acres in wheat, and expects this year to increase this figure considerably. To repeat the well-known facts regarding the fertility and extent of the Red River Valley is now fortunately unnecessary, as these are admitted on all sides. But the practical question for us is, Why are we not exporting this grain, when we have all the natural advantages? We are aware that grain generally chooses a water way in preference to a railroad, but at the same time we believe that a line so direct would, if well managed, prove a successful competitor with any possible system of water carriage.

In conclusion, we may quote from one of Mr. Peter Mitchell's letters written during a trip in the Northwest last fall. Speaking of this line, he says: "I have already referred to the importance of this route for the promotion of the trade of the Canadian Pacific road, and making Montreal the point of export for the corn and cattle of the west. Should the project now actively agitated in the Northwest of a direct line from St. Paul to the Sault be carried out, it will be of vast importance to the trade of the lakes and railways of Canada. It requires but 224 miles to be constructed on the Canadian side, and about 100 from the Sault to Marquette, to give through connection now, which would tide over the period until the better project of the direct line was completed. I do not require to go over the reasons why wheat should be transported from Minnesota, Dakota, and other northwestern districts by this route. The fact of its being 500 miles shorter to the seaboard and to Liverpool by this than by any other route would command the trade, especially the enormous cattle trade which, although yet in its infancy, has become a great source of wealth to the western country."

It is not to be wondered at that Canada is suffering financially when the fact is considered that the sum of *one hundred million pounds sterling* of British capital is loaned on mortgage, and that *seventy per cent. of the real estate* in the country is more or less encumbered. A terrible annual drain upon the resources of the country thus exists and demands the most serious consideration: very few of the agriculturists can afford to pay interest on loans, and the farm interests must be depreciating in value. The recent law fixing the rate of interest at seven per cent. has been, doubtless, framed with good intentions, but it is doubtful whether legislation can determine the value of any commodity. This value is generally ruled by the law of supply and demand.

Some good Catholics in and around Montreal are asking what can be the matter with Bishop Fabre? They say he is neglecting the weightier matters of the diocese, and giving his mind—or what used to be his mind—to trashy trivialities. And they have some show of reason for saying this. The Bishop has forbidden ladies to appear in public without wearing some kind of cape or shawl, for he deems it immoral that they should make a display of "figure." He also forbids the nuns from shaking hands with any mortal in pants—age and relations no excuse—and they are not allowed to offer refreshments to

visitors—not so much as a cup of tea. One thing more he has done, which adds that last straw which is supposed to break the back of the well-known camel—he has ecclesiastically and authoritatively prohibited private theatricals. Now, it is an ascertained fact that a lady's life is not worth living if she cannot show her figure—when the dress-maker's art is not needed, welcome the deluge—and the sexes ought, at least, to be allowed to shake hands; and it is woman's right to be hospitable; and even Cardinals in Rome attend private theatricals, and enjoy them, and Bishop Fabre can hardly hope to make Montreal equal Rome in piety. So all this is trying the souls of even the faithful in the Church, and they propose a collection to give the Bishop a change of air.

It is rumoured that Mr. Bradlaugh proposes to travel this continent to lecture in honour and glory of atheism. Of course, he will pose as a martyr, and make money by it. Probably Bradlaugh has heard that Ingersoll pockets about \$30,000 per year by vending his clap-trap blasphemies, and hopes to get some help from this reigning mammon of unrighteousness. He will succeed, if he come, for we are devoted to nothing, and quite willing to pay for it.

The *Globe* has come out with a long article on "Commercial Union and Annexation," in which there is every evidence that the writer was too angry to be logical and accurate. It is simply a rehash of what the *Globe* has all along been saying, that a Zollverein with the United States must mean annexation. No notice whatever is taken of the fact that on the continent of Europe the thing has been tried and is successfully demonstrating now that a commercial union does not necessarily involve political union. The *Globe* speaks of a Zollverein as shutting us out from all the European markets, uniting our business with that of the United States, and precipitating a commercial catastrophe by "a sudden disruption of our trade relations with our neighbours," all of which is nonsense. Are the merchants of the United States shut out in any particularly exasperating manner from the European markets? Are they at war, commercially, with the rest of the world? and only the *Globe* can see the possibility of catastrophe if a change were to be made. We enacted the N. P., and did not bring upon ourselves any such calamity.

The *Globe* says: "First in the order of forces that will prevent the success of the Zollverein agitation is the pride which Canadians must feel in shaping their own political destiny," but is it impossible for the *Globe* to discover that those Canadians who are agitating for a Zollverein are endeavouring "to shape their own political destiny" just as much, and perhaps a little more than the Free Traders of the country. They were content to let the political and commercial and every other kind of destiny shape itself. The men who believe in and work for Independence, and even those who advocate Annexation are by no means disposed to give up the work of "shaping their own political destiny." On the contrary, they are anxious to try their hand at bettering their condition and helping destiny a little. If that is the "first in the order of forces"—and the *Globe* gives no second—it seems to me that the advocates of a Zollverein have a comparatively easy task to perform.

But it is reassuring to know that at last the *Globe* hears the "boom" of coming prosperity. It says: "The harvest is full of promise, and another crop nearly as good as the last will set the people firmly on their feet. With renewed prosperity the clamour of the few annexationists in Montreal will be stilled." Undoubtedly they will "be stilled" when they are quite sure that the people are "firmly on their feet," but unfortunately they do not see such brightness near at hand as the *Globe* speaks of. Generally the people feel that they have to wade through more trouble before they will find anything firm to place their feet upon.

I do not see what ground the *Globe* has for expecting that a harvest nearly as good as the last will do so much toward setting us upon our feet. We exported last year "agricultural products" to the value of \$25,970,887, out of which the wheat and flour represented \$2,890,853, which makes it evident that a good harvest cannot help us to any very appreciable extent. Our exports of "animals and their