

Impressed with these considerations, and the fact that applications are now entertained by Congress for the grant of large national aid to open new commercial channels and improve old ones from the west to the seaboard, it is respectfully submitted, as a measure of sound political economy, regarding the national wealth and the revenue to be derived from it, that such aid as may be necessary for the judicious improvement of the Erie canal to its maximum capacity for transportation, so as to enable it to carry expeditiously and at the lowest practicable cost such freight as may be brought to it, shall be granted by the general government of the United States, provided the State of New York shall, at the same time, pledge its faith by a simple law, embodying in substance the traditional policy expressed by Clinton, Morris, and Fulton, that after the cost of the canal has been paid no tax, toll, or impost shall be levied upon the passage of boats through the said canal other than shall be needful to pay the annual expense of superintending and keeping it in repair; thus completing a free national channel of inland navigation extending 1,500 miles to the centre of the continent, and practically carrying out the most important feature of the Constitution, by establishing free trade and free commerce between the States.

In the presence of these historical reminiscences and commercial and financial considerations, it may now be well asked if the time has not arrived when the general government should not adopt the policy advocated by Madison, Gallatin, Clinton, Morris, and Fulton, by extending its strong arm and taking "the vexed question" of the improvement of this great national channel-way of internal commerce to its maximum capacity from the arena of narrow, conflicting political and local interests, and relieve the friends of a comprehensive and progressive policy in regard to it from those long and trying struggles and delays which have always preceded important improvements. Can national aid be extended to any object through which the national prosperity and revenue could be so largely increased? Should this policy be adopted, the trade and commerce of the border nation would in the future, as in the past, contribute to our public welfare, yielding to the supremacy of our national advantages, and the dominion of Canada would desist from any further unprofitable rivalry.

Had the Canadians been willing to accept the liberal privileges extended to them in the fraternal spirit they were granted, yielding to the destiny unalterably fixed by geography, climate, and the boundaries established under the Ashburton treaty, and not vainly attempted to exercise a commercial dominion (worthy of imperial ambition) over our western trade, and its transit lines to the Atlantic, they would to-day have been enjoying commercial freedom, and free access to our markets for the sale of their products, and would have been permitted to retain the advantages which the reciprocity treaty gave them by placing them on a commercial equality with the States of this Union, without being subject to any of its burdens.

Neither the trade nor the public works of any other country should be looked upon in an unfriendly spirit. It is ignoble to hold other nations back, or obstruct the chariot wheels of progress in any part of the world. We should rather seek pre-eminence by developing those national advantages in our own country which, while they promote our own prosperity, will also benefit others. The expressions of Mr. Burlingame when at the head of the Chinese embassy (he said, "We come here to seek the unification of the human family, and we trust that all will meet us in like spirit in this republic") * embody the policy we should

* Mr. Burlingame's reply to Mr. Hatch's address to the Chinese Embassy, at Niagara Falls.