

shall consider the various treaties between Great Britain and the United States and the other countries in which the terms on which the canal was to be used by all nations, are specifically set forth; third, the attitude of the United States Senate both with regard to the tolls charged to the foreign and coastwise trade of merchant vessels using the canal; fourth, the disadvantage to Canada in the final decision of the Senate by which the coast-wise traffic of the United States is permitted to use the canal free of tolls, while the coast-wise trade of Canada is subject to the same tolls as the shipping of foreign nations, and, lastly, the attitude which we should assume in endeavouring to secure justice for our shipping under the solemn treaty agreed to both by the United States and Great Britain.

For many years before Columbus set sail towards the west in the hope of discovering a short route to India, it was the opinion of European geographers that such a route existed, and although Columbus failed in his quest, France and Great Britain were incited by his example to send expeditions from time to time for the same purpose. To Spain, however, belongs the honour of extending her explorations as far west as the Isthmus of Darien, and Balboa, a Spanish explorer, was the first European to cross the isthmus and look upon the still waters of the Pacific ocean. This was in 1513. In 1521 the Spanish government made a survey of the isthmus to ascertain if a canal connecting the two oceans was feasible. Here this great project rested without further action for three centuries. In 1804 Humboldt the great traveller explored four different routes for a canal and made known to the world his opinion regarding its commercial advantages.

As time went on the growing commerce of the United States between its Atlantic and Pacific coast, as well as the enormous development of commerce between Europe and Japan, China, Mexico and the republics of the west coast of South America, accentuated the desirability of the short route by way of Panama instead of the long and perilous route by way of Magellan straits. The advantage to navigation in thus shortening the distance between some of the larger sea ports of the world from the east to the west is very striking. For instance,

taking Liverpool as representing the most important port in Europe, the distance from Liverpool to Vancouver would be shortened by 5,666 miles, and from other European ports, such as Antwerp and Havre, more or less to a similar extent.

Turning to this side of the Atlantic I find, on the authority of Mr. Johnson, Commissioner of the United States on the Panama canal, that the distance between New York and San Francisco would be shortened by 7,873 miles, to the west coast of South America 5,139 miles, and to Yokohama 3,768 miles, with a proportionate advantage to New Orleans and the other American ports on the south. From New York to Sydney, Australia, there would be a saving of 3,669 miles, to Melbourne 2,770 and to Wellington, New Zealand, 2,493 miles. Similar advantages in distance would accrue to the commerce of the republics on the east and west coast of South America.

If we simply consider the construction of the Panama canal as it is likely to affect Canadian commerce, the following advantages would accrue:

1. Vancouver is brought 7,271 miles nearer to Montreal than it is by the Straits of Magellan. Car loads of merchandise across the continent cost \$30 per ton and upwards. By way of the Panama canal the cost is estimated at from \$6 to \$9 per ton, with delivery in 30 days instead of 90 days around the Horn. The trade between British Columbia and the maritime provinces last year amounted to 118,417 tons, including vessels entered and cleared. With a shorter route by way of the Panama canal and the substantial reduction in freights as compared with the transcontinental railways, this trade would no doubt increase rapidly.

2. The distance between Vancouver and Liverpool would be reduced by 5,666 miles. The effect of this would no doubt be largely to increase the imports and exports of British Columbia to and from Europe. In fish alone the output of British Columbia in 1910 amounted to \$9,000,000, a large portion of which already goes to European markets. British Columbia has also a large output of timber the value of which will be greatly enhanced by cheaper transportation.

3. The Panama canal would afford to Canadian shipping easier access to the re-