pectations of the future are likely to be borne out by fact. In 1851, Mr. Andrews (Report to United States Government,) estimated the value of the commerce of the great lakes to be about £80,000,000. We are now at the close of the year 1855, very nearly four years have elapsed since Mr. Andrews made his calculation and report, and during that short space of time £30,000,000 have been added to the value of lake commerce; or in other words, at the present moment the commerce of the great lakes is estimated at one hundred and ten millions currency. The imports and exports of this region by the River St. Lawrence alone, exceeded in 1855 £8,000,000, and they were exclusively Canadian. There is much of promise in this for the future, much to induce us to be up and stirring, in order to secure our position and render it immovable.

The construction of railways, the increase of population, the high price of grain, and the removal of fiscal regulations, have effected, during the past two years, so startling a change in the prospects for the future of this country, that it has become a matter of difficulty to select an appropriate subject for the purpose of illustrating the curious effects of our progress, effects which we all feel and see around us for the time being, but are not much in the habit of searching for five or ten years ahead, and of their probable influence then. Take the item, fire-wood. The number of families in Western Canada, reckoning five persons to a family, is about 250,000. Each family consumes for fire-wood, or destroys in the process of clearing, at the lowest average twenty cords of wood per annum. In other words, 5,000,000 cords of wood are annually annihilated by this means alone. The consumption of our railroads at the close of the present year will be about 200,000 cords; steam boats consume at least an equal amount; so that the total quantity is 5,400,000 cords, which at sixty cords per acre is equal to the growth of 90,000 acres. In 1851-2, the area of wooded and wild land surveyed and held was 6,123,132 acres; and we may with justice assume, that notwithstanding the annual additions to the surveyed lands, yet the *accessible* portion of our wooded land at present does not exceed 5,000,000 acres, or enough to last for fire-wood purposes not longer than twenty-five years, making due allowance for increase of population, and consumption in various ways. Will this consumption take place? Certainly not; rise in price will check it; the more valuable woods will gradually be preserved for exportation and manufacturing purposes. The Paris exhibition, in which we have so signally distinguished ourselves as a practical, common-sense people, will secure this new field of industry for us. What then is to be the substitute? Coal, the coal of Ohio and Pennsylvania; perhaps as years roll on the coal of Illinois; it may be too that the coal of Michigan will yet be found serviceable. The future commerce in coal is an easy problem. The great west, though possessing boundless prairies and mines, has but little timber, and many of the coal-beds are imaginary. Not less than three-fourths of the so-called coal-beds of Dr. Owen will have to be swept from the map. She must look to the East, to the Lake region, for her fuel for most purposes. Chicago now requires for 1855, 80,000 tons, Milwaukee 30,000, Toronto 17,000 tons; and in short the great lakes generally, including the towns on their coasts and the steamers on their waters, no less an amount than 700,000 tons? What will be the requirement in 1860? What in 1865?

Again, take the item iron. Our railways are groaning under their incessant burdens; but iron, strong as it is, cannot endure for ever; and you may safely say that the average period of the durability of the iron of a railroad does not exceed five years. This is an ascertained fact, and a most important one; it amounts to this—that before 1860 all the railways in North America will require on an average to renew their iron tracks? Where is the iron to come from? Can Europe supply her own increasing want and ours besides; or will not rather enterprise and necessity open out that vast mineral region of Superior, and give our own manufacturers iron within the borders of the great Lakes? In 1851 the United States imported 188,626 tons of iron, of an agregate value of $4,900,000, and at a cost of $26 per ton. In 1854 the same country imported 282,866 tons, having a value of $12,020,000, and, including duty, at a cost of $49 49c. per ton, or not far short of double the price in 1851.

I have selected two items, coal and iron, because they are at the foundation of all modern enterprise; they constitute in themselves the crude yet mighty means by which the United Kingdom has reached its incalculable wealth and gigantic power. They are equally the means by which the United States of America and the Canadas have arrived at their present position, and on which they found their hopes for future greatness. Of what value would the richest prairies loaded with grain be, if means of export were closed? Of what value is that prostrate pine, which lies in huge magnificence at our feet, as long as there exists no hope of conveying it where it may be made to serve some useful purpose. It will not where the storm has laid it, and so will thousands around us until means of communication are opened out: then they become of value, and the nearer they are to market the greater their worth. It has pleased Providence to withhold one of these mighty engines of enterprise and wealth from us. Coal no doubt once existed in vast abundance in Western Canada, but it has long since been swept away, and the outlying patches in the United States just touch our borders. But in our deprivation we find another strong necessity for extending our means of communication, to supply not only ourselves but the ports and cities of Lake Ontario Valley. A very large portion of our mineral region is covered with trees which are not fit for commercial purposes, but may be converted into charcoal with the greatest advantage, and thus meet in some degree, as far as iron and copper is concerned, the want of coal. All the excellent Swedish iron is smelted by means of charcoal, and as soon as means of communication render our mineral region commercially accessible, charcoal can be manufactured at one-fourth of the price it obtains in Europe. The Huron, Lake Nippissing and Ottawa Canal, will change that dreary wilderness into a bustling centre of industry.

Now imagine, for the sake of grasping this subject more easily, that a ship canal between Lake Huron and Lake Ontario were constructed; that it were capable of letting down the produce of Lake Huron some 350 feet into Lake Ontario, in propellors or screws, carrying at least 1,000 tons. The length of the canal would be about 100 miles, and it would save in actual distance alone not less than 300 miles. It would become one of the great highways for merchandize of every description going to the East, and from the East going to the West. Its extremities would be converted into depots of coal to supply the steamers running to and from Oswego, Rochester, and Ogdensburg, being on the line of traffic, and the nearest points to the mines of Ohio, from which they must derive their supplies. Chicago, which in 1854 shipped nearly 13,000,000 bushels of wheat, would send every grain by that short route to Oswego and the St. Lawrence ports. But if Chicago shipped 13,000,000 in 1854, what will she do in 1860; and what will the other ports of Lake Michigan, emulating her in enterprize and courage, send to swell the traffic which must cross the great barrier of Western Canada, to find the cheapest route by way of Oswego and the St. Lawrence, to the most profitable markets in the East, and beyond the seas? Whatever argument applies to exports, holds good with imports; an equal tide of traffic will return by the same route for Lake Michigan and Lake Huron Ports; in a word for the great North West. The rush for land is even greater in the Western States than in Western Canada. In 1854 the United States government sold the enormous area of 3,276,000 acres in Iowa alone, at an average price of $1 24 cents the acre. In Missouri, 2,896,000 acres were sold during the same period, at an average price of 43 cents per acre. The total amount of land sold in the United States and its territories during 1854 amounted to 14,869,368 acres, payment being made in cash, the receipts being $105,49,000. It is a most fortunate circumstance for Western Canada, that her form is that of a wedge, penetrating among the Southern States of the Lake region. That single geographical condition secures to her a large share of the traffic between these States and the East, as already exemplified on the Great Western railway; thus leaving for Central Western Canada and the Ottawa Valley the commerce of Lake Michigan ports led directly into Lake Ontario. This subject might be greatly amplified, and with advantage, but time warns us to limit these encouraging speculations, and to turn our attention to the internal condition and prospects of the country we are surveying.

A new state of affairs has arisen in Western Canada during the past two years. High prices have had a marvellous effect, and one which is not without hazard to the farmer, whose industry lies at some distance from the leading lines of traffic. As an illustration we may take Toronto markets, and trace the effects of high prices among many of the smaller farmers of that neighbourhood. The illustration will hold good for every other town and village in the country.

It is necessary to remind you that the majority of the