

of these experiments, that the size of these vessels has been increasing year by year. I find, by a statement made up by the Harbor Commissioners of Montreal, that in 1874 that port was visited by 731 vessels, averaging 590 tons. In 1879, five years afterwards, 612 vessels—a smaller number—visited the port, but their average tonnage was 828 tons, showing a very rapid rise in size. Still further, the following year the 710 vessels that came into that port averaged 885 tons. It may be stated, however, that a much larger bulk of the traffic is performed by steamships of a very much larger size than these averages. The average size of the steamers in 1880 was 1,341 tons. It happens, however, that all the trade of the port cannot be accomplished, as I shall presently have occasion to show, by these large steamers. They may serve the larger purpose of carrying the great productions of trade between the Port of Montreal and the great ports of Liverpool, London and Glasgow, to which the large volume of trade concentrates; but it is very necessary that the smaller class of vessels should be maintained in the trade, for a great many of the services have to be performed to out-ports and ports of call to which our cargoes of produce are so often consigned. The question that meets us in connection with this traffic is that of the competition with the Atlantic ports of the United States, for which it is not necessary to improve 200 miles of inland navigation in order to reach them, and we find this competition is very sharp and it is growing. Before looking at some comparisons of the cost of tolls and charges on goods coming by way of the Atlantic ports, I may state that in this competition we meet a people very much older than we are. Fifty millions of people, whose capital is ready for use in every venture of trade, is very much more in proportion than fifty millions against four millions, because they have not only the accumulation of fifty millions as compared with four millions, but they have the accumulation of the capital that results from fifty millions who are a great deal older and better established in their position than our four millions. And we have to compete with them in the face of the fact that whereas we are beginning with our best means and resources to export a good deal of the produce of this new country, our imports are very much smaller than theirs, and we have not only to compete with them for the carrying of our produce outward, but they are competing very closely with us for the carrying inward of our own very moderate imports as well as theirs. I will quote some statistics that have been prepared by the Secretary of the Board of Trade of Montreal, who has discovered among other things that the through rates of freight for merchandize, for instance, from Great Britain to Toronto or other ports in Ontario, are practically the same, whether the ocean terminus is at New York, Boston or Montreal. There are no wharfage rates on imports at either of the two former ports, New York or Boston, on merchandize *in transitu* to inland ports, either in the United States or Canada. On the other hand, the harbor revenue at Montreal, in 1879, amounted to \$269,596, as was stated by one of the hon. members from Montreal, and the dues levied on imported and exported merchandize appear to have been 56 per cent. of that income. The effect is simply to add about \$180,000 to the cost of property carried to and from the Port of Montreal, which could have been saved in the ports of Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore. I find that the charges on ordinary goods shipped to and from Montreal ranges from 30 cents to 50 cents per ton. Here is a statement showing the effect of wharfage charges on vessels at the several Atlantic ports. Taking for example a vessel of 1,500 tons, the ordinary charge for wharfage, per day, will be in Boston \$7.50, New York \$10.50, Philadelphia \$4, Baltimore \$2, Montreal \$11.25; that is to say, the charges at Montreal are half as much more than at Boston, nearly three times as much as Philadelphia, and something more than at New

York. The pilotage maintains something like the same proportion. The pilotage of a vessel of 600 tons, drawing 18 feet of water, to and from Boston, amounts to \$117.90; New York, \$172.80; Philadelphia, \$162; Montreal, \$193.50. The rates of freight at these different ports are, of course, governed by competition, and it is well known that within a period of twenty years the rates at all these ports have fallen until the ocean freight is about one-half, and as regards inland freight I find from a tabular statement that from 1861 to 1880 the freight, taking as a basis a bushel of wheat or corn from Chicago to those ports, has fallen from 27 cents to 11½ cents, that being the lowest point reached, the average rate last year being 13 cents to American ports. Fortunately for the traffic, by our route the inland rates have fallen so that the average rates of freight from the West to Montreal are something under those rates, otherwise it would be simply impossible that carrying by this route could continue. But there is another fact of still greater importance, and that is the position with respect to canal charges. When I first had something to do with this trade, twenty years ago, the toll on a bushel of wheat through the Erie Canal was 6½ cents; to-day that has been reduced to one cent. And that is not alone the measure of the value that the city of New York and the State of New York, and all the United States together attach to this traffic, because it is well known there is a recommendation before the Legislature of New York at this moment, to make traffic through these canals absolutely free, and that proposal has been endorsed by the Board of Trade of the city of New York. The tolls on our canals—I do not complain of them, because I believe they are very little more than are necessary to maintain the working of the canals, to the extent they are beyond that I think they might be reduced—have not practically been changed for twenty years. Under these circumstances, it is rather a marvel that we have any trade at all by the St. Lawrence route. We are assisted, of course, by this fact of the cheaper inland navigation by this route. We have been assisted very much during the last two or three years by the great increase of the cattle export trade in which we have some advantages over the United States. I find that the shipments of cattle in the Port of Montreal have grown until last season they reached the value of nearly \$2,000,000. During the early period of the growth of our steam marine, the one line that existed at that time was assisted by a subsidy for carrying the mails. That assistance still holds, but the traffic apart from that has been sufficient for the establishment of two or three other lines, and the trade is still increasing, and, I hope, will continue to increase. I think we owe something to the tenacity of private enterprise, and I think I might say further, we owe a little to Canadian patriotism, because I believe there are people in this country who carry out the homely principle of the Hebrew matron, who dwelt with her family "among her own people." I believe there are people in this country who prefer to develop their own route, to exercise their industry and enterprise at home, and who are not carried away by the flash and the glitter of free trade and cosmopolitanism. I need not refer further to the figures in connection with the burdens upon this trade. The expenditure upon the deepening of Lake St. Peter up to this moment is, in round numbers, about \$1,500,000. The channel is made to a depth of 24 feet, which admits a class of vessels of a size which has been found so far to be profitable in the Atlantic trade. If this were the only burden upon vessels coming to the Port of Montreal it would be a small matter, but it does not touch the Port of Montreal at all. It is really a question that concerns the Dominion of Canada, just as much as every mile of our canal navigation. The expenditure upon the harbor of Montreal has been, apart from this, about