

The population of Ontario or Upper Canada, in a very few years from the date of the Union, considerably exceeded that of the French Canadian province, which had been given so long a start in the race of civilisation. The provinces by the sea, then politically isolated from the country on the St. Lawrence and lakes, also made steady advances during this era of peace, especially in maritime enterprise. But, in tracing the commercial progress of Canada, we cannot fail to remark that it really dates from the extension of her political privileges and the removal of those restrictions which England imposed on colonial trade and navigation during those times when sound principles of political economy were hardly understood, and commercial fallacies lay to a great extent at the basis of all her commercial legislation. The result of the statesmanlike policy that the mother country within twenty or thirty years has adopted towards Canada in common with other colonies, has not only tended to stimulate the energy and enterprise of the Canadian people, but has actually benefitted the manufacturing and mercantile community of Great Britain, inasmuch as the provinces are now consumers of British merchandise to a far greater extent than would have been possible under the old system of monopolies and navigation laws. Fifty years ago the whole population of British North America was not equal to a million of souls, whilst at the present time it is in excess of four millions. The total trade at that time did not exceed the value of \$12,000,000, whereas it may be now estimated at fully \$170,000,000. This is the natural result of the peace and the political and commercial freedom which we have now so long enjoyed under the protecting guidance of the parent state.

In her extensive range of sea and lake navigation, in her inexhaustible fisheries, in her wide sweep of forests, and above all, in the energy and endurance of her people, we see the elements which have enabled Canada to reach a foremost position among maritime nations—equal, in fact, to the country which gave birth to Cartier and Champlain, and far a head of the Spaniards and Dutch, so supreme on the ocean in the days when the name of Canada was never heard of. So great is the change that has taken place since the century when many a stately Spanish galleon crossed the ocean from the Spanish main, and Tromp swept the seas with a broom hoisted at his masthead. The Fisheries have naturally laid the foundations of the maritime industry of the provinces. From the earliest times of which we have any record, fishermen from the Basque and Norman coast have flung their lines on the banks of Newfoundland, and carried home full fares long before a single English vessel ventured into the same seas to prosecute this lucrative branch of industry. But the French settlements on the Lower St. Lawrence, and on the shores of the gulf and the peninsula of Acadie, had but limited opportunities of following the fisheries in the warlike times which preceded the conquest of Canada. Louisbourg was then the rendezvous of the French vessels which yearly resorted to these fisheries; and it is recorded that in the year preceding the capture of that strongly-fortified town by the English fleet under Warren, and the fishermen of New England under the command of Pepperrell, France had some 600 sail, manned by 20,000 sailors employed in our