

THE COMMERCE OF THE CANALS.

DIVERSION OF THE WESTERN GRAIN TRAFFIC.

The annual statement of the commerce of Buffalo, furnished by the *Courier* of that city for 1869, presents some interesting though not very agreeable facts and figures as to traffic upon the Erie Canal. The imports of grain and flour (reduced to bushels) by lake, are 45,007,163; against 49,949,858 last year, a decrease of nearly five million bushels. The total of exports by canal shows only 23,612,347 bushels choosing that channel to the seaboard; against 36,763,663 bushels last year. The aggregate of all articles shipped by canal is 1,281,706 tons; against 1,476,298 tons last year; and the total of tolls received is \$1,644,542, against \$2,040,015 received last year, a loss to the canal revenue of nearly \$400,000 for the year.

The lumber trade stands about as last year, the receipts, 224,935,748 feet, being an increase of nearly seventeen million feet over last year; while the exports by canal are 165,197,178, or over a million of feet less than last year. A falling off of nearly one-half is noticeable in the trade in staves.

A comparative statement of the receipts at the five principal lake ports, shows that the grain trade of the west continues to expand in its proportions, although the share of Buffalo in it is annually shrinking. The receipts at these ports (Chicago, Milwaukee, Toledo, Detroit and Cleveland) for the present year amount to 117,317,064 bushels of grain and flour, an increase over last year of nearly nine millions of bushels. It thus appears that of the enormous totality of western grain receipts, of which formerly the great bulk reached Buffalo, there are now scarcely three-eighths shipped to that port, while less than one fourth of the same seeks its way to the seaboard by the Erie canal.

New York State has therefore to make note of two great phases of diversion of trade which are now in operation to her detriment: the first being the tendency of grain to avoid the canals, the second its tendency to ignore the state altogether. The *Courier* says in its resumé;—"As the difference between lake imports and canal exports of grain amounts, according to our tables, to 16,394,816 bushels, it is not difficult to believe what is indicated in a recent report of the Erie Railway, that nearly ten millions of bushels have been transported to New York by that route alone, during the year now closing. But, admitting that each of the two great lines of railroad from the west has carried to New York ten millions of bushels of grain during the present year, there are still nearly sixty-nine millions of bushels of the aggregate received at lake ports which have failed to reach the commercial metropolis. A large amount of this of course, is absorbed for home consumption, but the far larger remainder, it is clear to see, has obtained access to the seaboard at other points than New York. In confirmation of this fact, we note that the receipts of the present year at Montreal, of flour and wheat alone, amount to 12,174,565 bushels, an increase of 5,890,661 over last year. The figures of the grain trade at Baltimore, Philadelphia, and other points will doubtless tell a similar story, if we had them at hand. To sum up, we have 117,000,000 of bushels of the cereals starting on the route of exportation. Of this aggregate 45,007,163 bushels reach this city by lake; 23,612,357 are shipped by canal to tide-water, and perhaps 20,000,000 are otherwise conveyed to New York. Thus the grain trade, the natural highway of

which is the Erie canal, is being diverted from that neglected channel, and from this State. These figures are interesting to Buffalo, but they are still more important to New York city and the state at large. Their forcible teaching is, that, if there be any such thing as a policy adequate to the retrieving of what is lost, and the retention for New York of her commercial supremacy, it had better be tried at once."

There is certainly much food for reflection, as the *Courier* suggests, in this exhibit of Buffalo commerce relating to the canals; for the canal commerce of Buffalo, standing at the head of canal navigation, is the commerce of the whole line of the great Erie channel. There is no doubt that if New York is to retain her position with her public works as the main channel of the grain and other bulky products of the west, bound east, she must lose no time in making an effort toward the end in view. How much of the grain trade diverted from the Erie canal may be chargeable to the rapacity of the Buffalo dock men in levying rates of elevation, &c., is a question which among the others connected with this subject will bear investigation.

One thing is certain, and that is that the Carrying Trade must be made the objective point. All tax of entry at the point of transshipment, and all tolls of transportation, must be reduced and varied as circumstances may require in subserviency to that—maintenance of the canals in proper repair, with a free channel and sufficient depth of water, going, of course, before all. These are the desiderata of the canal situation. The men at the head gates of Buffalo, the State, and all other parties in interest, save the productive classes of navigators, whose compensation is regulated in a great measure by the law of supply and demand, must yield of the income they are deriving from the canals, and allow more to go to the account of construction and repairs and remuneration of the forwarders and boatmen, or very soon the bulk of the traffic will have flown in other directions, and there will be little profit for division in any quarter.—*Rochester Union*.

WONDERFUL EXPEDITION.

The expedition now being made by Sir Samuel Baker into Africa, is one of the most wonderful on record, and may ultimately produce important results to the commerce of the world. The expedition is under the patronage of the Viceroy of Egypt, who has conferred absolute power on the great African explorer, and given him *carte blanche* for all the expenses! The whole force is not less than 2,000 men, consisting of an Egyptian and a Soudan Infantry regiment and a small force of Cavalry and Artillery. In August last there was sent up the Nile a flotilla of 6 steamers and 30 sailing vessels, which has since been largely supplemented.—Arab ship builders were taken along to build wooden vessels on the Albert Nyanza, and other inland waters. There are only 15 Europeans in all, including Sir Samuel and his wife and six English engineers. The objects of this expedition are noble and worthy, although many of the native princes will probably not regard them in the same light. The objects appear to be 1st, to put down the slave trade; to establish a powerful government so as to put a stop to the never ceasing wars between the tribes; 3rd, to annex the Equatorial Nile Basin to Egypt; 4th, to introduce the cultivation of cotton on an extensive scale; 5th, open a chain of trading stations, from north to south, some-

what after the system of the Hudson Bay Company on this continent. These are certainly great and important objects, and if the expedition turns out to be successful, it must usher in a brighter and happier day for that part of Africa. Up to October last the outlay in England had been so carefully managed that including immense supplies of beads, merchandise, together with the steam flotilla of the Samuda, with steam saw-mills, lathes, tools, gear, &c., only £26,000 had been expended. When firmly established, Sir Samuel Baker intends to enforce peace, to hold each chief responsible for the acts of his tribe, to exact tribute in the way of opening up roads on the same principle as the road tax of Ceylon, and to compel every tribe to cultivate an amount of corn proportionate to its population. All this it must be admitted, sounds a little arbitrary to people used to the widest civil freedom; but when the present condition of the Africans is considered, there can be no doubt the changes proposed to be made by this expedition will speedily raise the state of civilization, and consequently the happiness of those semi-civilized tribes who never seem satisfied unless they are killing or selling each other. The expedition is also important to the civilized world. The Viceroy of Egypt seems to be not quite disinterested, although it is gratifying to think that, whilst adding to the importance of Egypt he may be able to confer incalculable blessings on the African tribe. Great Britain is largely interested in cotton rising, and it is not unlikely that, before many years, Manchester may receive large supplies of cotton from Africa, and send valuable cargoes of goods in return.—Taking this expedition all in all, it is certainly one of the most wonderful of modern times, and promises to usher in a new era in commerce and civilization in that at present benighted quarter of our globe.

40TH BATTALION BAND.—Our townspeople will be gratified to learn that Mr. H. F. Chalaupka, M. B., formerly so popular and successful as a musician, has again become a resident of Cobourg, and has been engaged by the Officers of the 46th Battalion as Instructor for the Band. Under his management we hope Cobourg will again have the best Band in the Province, outside of the regular service.—*Cobourg Star*.

REMITTANCES

Received on subscription to the VOLUNTEER REVIEW up to Saturday the 22nd inst. :—

St. John, N.B.—(Per R. Hunter, Esq., Agent) —Lt. Col. Otty, \$2; Col J. V. Thurgar, \$2; Lt. Col. S. K. Foster, \$2; Lt. Col. C. R. Ray, \$2; Major Jago, A.A.G., \$2; Major J. Eyans, \$2; Capt. J. W. Parks, \$2; Capt. J. D. Underhill, \$2; Surgeon S. Z. Earle, \$2; Maj. Richard Farmer, \$2; Capt. W. H. Scovil, Jr., \$2; Capt. John Kerr, \$2; Capt. Wm. Cunard, (Indian town) \$2; Kennedy F. Burns, Esq., (Bathurst) \$2; Lieut. John A. Kane, (Portland) \$2; Ensign Geo. Kerr Boston, \$2; Lieut. A. W. Lovett, \$2; Capt. Thos. Sullivan, \$2; Hon. Col. Botsford, (Sackville) \$2; S. J. Shanklin, (St. Martins) \$2; Lieut. D. M. Vince, (Hartland) \$1; Lt. Col. Maunsell, D.A.G., (Fredricton) \$2; Capt. Calvin Powers, \$2.

HALIFAX, N.S.—(Per R. Hunter, Esq., Agent) —Major W. H. McAlister, \$2; J. H. Ritchie, Esq., \$2; Doctor Chas. J. Gossip, \$2.