

navigation, maintains relations as close. Nova Scotia, almost an island, sends vessels from every part of her shores to the neighboring ports of the Union, and carries on a trade so extensive, that, of the annual tonnage that enters the port of Boston, more than half is from Nova Scotia.

The means of intercommunication between Canada and the Lower Provinces, is utterly insignificant in the contrast.

By land, for practical purposes, none exists. An uncultivated and hilly country opposes an effectual barrier. Colonel Robinson's valuable report of his surveys in 1848, gives unquestionable information on this head. By water, the comparatively distant and circuitous navigation of the St. Lawrence offers the only route—one little used while open, and closed through a large part of the year. The result is ignorance and indifference as regards each other, with little concern or ability for mutual benefit.

An Inter-Colonial Railroad would give the means of communication at present wanting. It would open to Canada an Atlantic seaboard on British soil, from which she is now cut off; and it would offer to the Lower Provinces a ready access to the vast field of enterprise and progress occupied by their fellow subjects in the interior. It would prove a benefit of incalculable value, should it be the precursor of, as it is an absolute necessity towards, a legislative union of Her Majesty's North American Provinces,—a measure essential to the full development of the power which their situation and character are calculated to confer, and without which they never can attain the high position to which their united energies and advantages would lead them.

When the important objects to be accomplished by this work are considered, and the difficulties of carrying it out, owing to the large extent of uncultivated country through which it must pass in New Brunswick and Canada, with the consequent drawbacks upon its remunerative character, it seems not unreasonable to expect, in addition to the Imperial guarantee for the loan contracted by the Provinces, some more direct and substantial aid, as a contribution from the national funds, for national advantages.

Confining ourselves, however, to Nova Scotia, the aid we solicit is, we think, moderate, and such as would entail neither inconvenience nor loss on the British Government.

In pressing upon your urgent consideration the obligations which, in our opinion, impose upon Her Majesty's Government the duty of extensively aiding the construction of an Inter-Colonial Railroad, we are not insensible to the feeble influence excited by the representations of dangers distant and problematical, when the attention is already occupied by objects of present and urgent interest.

Much that we have suggested is however neither distant nor hypothetical, but is of actual existence and daily operation. For, while Canada remains cut off from communication with the Lower Provinces and with the Atlantic shore on British territory, the tendencies to alienation between her and the sister Provinces, and to the approximation of all the Colonies to the United States, must strengthen and mature.

That portion of our observations founded on the contingency of war with the United States, deals indeed with the future; but if the history of nations and the experience of the past may be relied on, it can hardly be treated as hypothetical, in the sense which would preclude it from present consideration—for the undertaking which we urge must be accomplished while the danger that prompts it is distant and contingent, otherwise it will come too late to avert the evils it is designed to counteract. That the time will come when the evils resulting from the want of such a communication between the North American Provinces, will be felt, should the measure be delayed, and that the question will arise,—Where rests the responsibility for the neglect? we cannot doubt. Her Majesty's Colonial subjects will not be found chargeable.