

continent by a narrow neck of land that divides the Gulf of St. Lawrence from the Bay of Fundy, and that is formed of alluvial soil. Hence rock cuttings can be almost entirely avoided. The construction of a ship-canal therefore for a few miles only would enable lake-propellers to pass into the Bay of Fundy, the waters of which are navigated by American river-steamers that, with their high deck saloons, are almost precisely similar to those that are to be seen on the lakes of the West. There would be then nothing to prevent a lake-propeller from loading at Chicago and reaching Boston in a few days without breaking bulk, and without the necessity for transshipment. The route by the St. Lawrence and the Bay of Fundy, from Chicago to Boston, would be simply a coasting voyage.

Such an outlet, it is clear, would defy all competition, and would become for all time to come the great highway of Western commerce.

At present the objection to Montreal as a point of transshipment is, that there is nothing to send back to the West as return freight. Extend the voyage of lake-propellers, and they would not only secure at the Eastern extremity of the Continent, and at the most remote outlet of its railway system, emigrants and the manufactures and products of Europe and of the Eastern States, but they would also utilize the coal and pottery, and, if necessary, the extensive marble deposits of Nova Scotia, to replace the bulky articles that constitute the export of the West. We should find Nova Scotian coal utilized in the same way that England employs her supplies of fuel. Every propeller going West could always rely upon an ample supply of coal, pottery, &c., to complete its return cargo; and as British coal is still shipped to Quebec past the shores of Nova Scotia, the latter would be enabled to send her coal to the far West, as ballast or back freight, at a price that could defy competition on the part of the adjacent collieries of Illinois.

Even if there were no demand for coal for the lines of steamships connecting with Europe, and if the American markets of the Eastern States were closed, there would be an abundant outlet