

becomes a strong argument in favour of making the line, rather than against it.

"The communication of the provinces with each other is cramped and restricted beyond measure by the same want.

"By sea the amount of intercourse may be judged of by the return given in Appendix No. 6, furnished by the Quebec Board of Trade."

This Appendix contains a list of 154 vessels, of 8,185 tons, arrivals, and 201 vessels, of 9,623 tons, clearances, all communicating with portions of the coast lying contiguous to the line of the proposed railway.

The Report goes on to state, that

"At the extremities of the line, and for some miles along the St. Lawrence, there is an abundant population. External commerce there is in an eminent degree. In that of agriculture its deficiency is great at present, but as there are millions of acres of good productive land, only wanting for the hands necessary to cultivate them, and the means of access to which would be afforded by the railway, this very circumstance may be made to conduce to the advantage of the line, and pay a large portion of the expense of its construction."

Upon the subject of traffic the Railway Commissioners state that they "agree with Major Robinson in not attaching much importance to the direct intercourse between Halifax and Quebec."

Major Robinson makes no such admission in his Report, nor any statement that can be construed into such an admission. He states, "that the direct communication between the two termini, Halifax and Quebec, is of a very limited nature." No one doubts but this is the case *at present*, and Major Robinson states the reason to be "that this limited intercourse arises entirely from the want of good means of intercommunication, such as would be afforded by the proposed railway." This statement does not therefore undervalue the traffic which would flow between the two termini after the communication by railway has been effected, for the report shows how it flows at present through the United States on the one hand, and along the dangerous navigation of the St. Lawrence on the other, and it is very nearly as unfair to judge of the traffic which would be attracted to this trunk line of communication, when constructed, by comparing it with what exists upon the present imperfect communication, as it would be to compare the amount of traffic which will be attracted to the projected tunnel through the Alps with the amount which now passes over these natural barriers.