

cent bread-producing region is to find its way to the eastern markets.

There are some who have held the opinion that more railroads would supply the necessary means of transportation. Hopes have been expressed that roads might be made to carry western produce more cheaply, and that in this way, as freights increased, new lines could be constructed to supply the demand. These ideas are quite fallacious. Experience proves that railways are a too expensive mode of carrying grain to distant markets, and that the water routes must inevitably take the precedence. As proof of this we observe that last year out of 52,798,161 tons of freight shipped from Chicago, 44,233,208 were sent by lake vessels, and only 8,233,203 by rail. This is an enormous difference, and as the water routes must always be the cheapest, it may be safely concluded that any new routes to the ocean, which are to greatly benefit the West in getting its productions to the markets of the world, must be by water and not by rail.

Justing as Canada does between the Eastern and Western States, any means of transportation which will materially shorten the distance to the seaboard, must be across our territory. This fact gives Canada a great interest in the solution of this important problem, and very early in our history called forth the ambition to attract western trade through our waters. To attain this laudable end, we made the Welland Canal and improved the navigation of the St. Lawrence, at very heavy expense. Up to this time, we have not been rewarded for our enterprise as we deserve to be. American trade has not used the St. Lawrence to the extent which we anticipated. But a glance at the map will, we think, convince any one that the prize must ultimately fall into our hands, and therefore it becomes us to enquire how we can best and most quickly secure it.

The first duty of our Dominion Government is, in our opinion, to improve our present St. Lawrence water route. If we have failed hitherto in attracting as much of the Western trade through our waters as we expected, we believe the main cause to be that our canals are not large enough to pass through vessels of the larger class. A very few vessels have been sent from some of the western lake ports of the United States to Europe and back; but to make this direct trade profitable, it is necessary that ocean vessels of heavy burthen be employed, and these cannot get through our canals at present. The importance of enlarging our canals was recognized during the Quebec Conference, and it was decided that the work should be undertaken as soon as ever the Dominion finances would permit. We hope this promise will be remembered, and that earnest efforts will be soon put forth to make our St. Lawrence route what nature evidently intended it to be—the main channel for western produce to the ocean.

When these improvements are made, the question of a new canal across Canadian territory, to enable vessels to avoid the round-about route by Detroit and Lake Erie, must be grappled with. We need hardly remind our readers that two routes for this great work are already proposed and earnestly advocated. The most northern route is that by the Ottawa river, and is commonly known as the Ottawa ship canal; the other is proposed to commence at some suitable point on the Georgian Bay and terminate at Toronto. The latter has been very energetically pushed by F. C. Capreol, Esq., of Toronto, who declared that English and American capital can be obtained to construct it without difficulty, if the Ontario Legislature will consent to grant 10,000,000 acres of wild lands as a bonus. The Ottawa Canal project is not as far advanced, at least so far as outward appearance goes; but it is very long since two leading members of the Dominion Government said that the day could not be far distant when the canal would be *une fait accompli*. We take it that no one in Canada would think of going on with both these canals during this century. It consequently becomes an important point which of the two would best promote the great object had in view, viz., the attraction of western trade through our waters.

So far as the writer is concerned, the Ottawa Ship Canal is considered the preferable route of the two. Not residing either at Toronto, Ottawa or Montreal, this opinion (whatever its value) is not swayed by local considerations; but on a calm examination of the advantages offered by each route, it is believed that the more northerly one is the best. Whilst not desirous of throwing any difficulties in the way of the Huron and Ontario Canal, we must say it is all but certain that it would cost vastly more than that by

the Ottawa river; in fact, some maintain that its cost would be so great as to prevent any hopes of its ever paying any reasonable dividends. The Ottawa Canal would be less than half as long as its rival, and what is of even more importance, would give the Western States a far shorter route to the seaboard. Every military man of eminence who has visited Canada of late, has pointed out how exceedingly important it would be as a means of defence. The latter route would also open up by far the largest tract of new country for settlement, and would serve to give Ontario some more backbone, of which it stands much in need. Looked at from almost any point of view, it is submitted that the proposed Ottawa Canal is undoubtedly the route which ought to be selected when the Dominion is prepared to grapple with such a large undertaking.

Whichever of these rival routes to the ocean may ultimately succeed, we feel assured that the rapid increase of western production will soon render the construction of one of them indispensable, and the sooner either of them is begun the better. Canada will be untrue to itself if it does not strain every nerve to secure a large share of the trade of the great West. The agricultural riches which will ultimately be sent from that great and fertile country eastwards every year, must enrich the channels along which it flows. It must build up towns and cities, it must fill lakes and rivers with shipping, and benefit every class of the community. The natural and best channel for this trade to flow to the ocean—because the shortest and cheapest—is through Canadian waters. Let our rulers take care that the Dominion is not robbed of this invaluable birthright.

THE PROSPERITY OF ONTARIO.

A SHORT trip through a portion of the Western Province has enabled us to see, and it gives us not a little gratification to be able to record it, the rapid growth and increased prosperity of the Province of Ontario, that portion of the Dominion which bids from its natural advantages, and the energy and enterprise of its inhabitants, to far outstrip in the race the slower moving Provinces of Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

At present the proceeds of an abundant harvest are being quickly carried to market, and in all sections the roads are alive with farmers and their heavily laden waggons hurrying to change their garnered grain into the ready money waiting to be paid for it. Barley, in especial, is coming in with unexampled rapidity, the high price paid, viz., \$1.12 to \$1.15 per bushel, proving very efficacious in bringing out the farmers' stores. In Toronto, the great central point for the purchase of this grain, may be seen every day on the principal roads strings miles long of waggons laden with the whitest and brightest of barley, destined mostly to be shipped across the lake to Oswego, and from thence to be distributed to all parts of the United States. The receipts at that point so far have been very heavy, and almost entirely from Canada. Usually, Chicago has a large surplus to ship, but this year, the crop has been a failure in the West, and that city is now a large customer for that of which formerly she had a large surplus. The demand from all points is steadily increasing, and the present price paid is generally looked upon as under rather than over the value, which will shortly be given. It is not our place to prophecy the future of barley or any other grain, but we have heard the opinion expressed by many of those whose opportunities are good for forming such an opinion, that 'ere long \$1.25 would be freely paid for all the barley in the country. The quality of the grain everywhere is very superior, being unusually bright in color (although the berry is somewhat light in weight), forming a striking contrast to samples we have seen of No. 1 barley from Chicago, which is dark and yellow, and much inferior for malting purposes to Canadian grown.

Wheat, though not moving as rapidly as barley, is nevertheless an abundant crop, and will, without doubt, prove very remunerative to the farmers and to the country. A considerable quantity is being marketed at various points, and the price paid pays well.

The storekeepers of course profit by the extensive circulation of money, and their sales during the past few weeks have been large, reducing their stocks so that it has in many instances become necessary for them to send in further orders for goods, and the wholesale houses in Toronto, Hamilton and Montreal have all felt the impetus given to trade. We notice

in the two first named cities especially, an amount of commercial prosperity to which for many years they were strangers, and without having any fears that Montreal will ever fall from her present position of the chief commercial city of the Dominion, we must acknowledge, and we do so freely and without any feeling of jealous rivalry, that her competitors for the great trade of the West have followed the example of enterprise she first set, and that henceforth the cities on the Lake will carry on a trade with the country lying to the West and North of them more commensurate with their geographical position than has hitherto, until this year, been the case. Years ago, it used to be the fashion down here to sneer at Upper Canadians, and rather make light of them, and we fear that even in later years we of Montreal may have altogether undervalued the ability of the cities of Ontario to enter into the commercial arena against us; but we must confess that the time has passed for such undervaluation, and our Montreal merchants will have need of all the *prestige* previously gained, of all the capital accumulated, and of the position held at the head of sea-going navigation, to enable them to maintain the position they have acquired. But there is room for all, and the keener the competition, the more cheaply will the consumer get his goods, and the more will he be able to purchase of what is necessary or pleasing to him.

THE ONTARIO EXHIBITION.

HAMILTON, 26th Sept., 1888.

(From our own Correspondent.)

THE Annual Provincial Exhibition of Ontario was concluded yesterday, and I send you a few jottings. From every point of view, the gathering has been an eminent success. The attendance of spectators was immense; particularly was this the case on Thursday, when it is calculated 20,000 people were on the grounds at one time! Notwithstanding the great influx of visitors from all parts of the Province, not a single unpleasant circumstance occurring on the Exhibition grounds, has been reported.

The Judges were at work on the Departments ready for their labours on Tuesday, but the formal opening may be said to date from Wednesday forenoon. His Honour or His Excellency (which?) Lieut-Governor Howland arrived at the Crystal Palace about noon. From some cause or other, he was not presented with an address by the Agricultural Association, a though he received that honour at the railway station at the hands of the Mayor of the City, and the President of the Local Committee. The Lieut-Governor's visit attracted very little attention.

Among other political celebrities present on the occasion, were the Hon. Sanfield Macdonald, Premier of Ontario; the Hon. William Macdougall, Commissioner of Public Works; and the Hon. John Carling, Local Minister of Agriculture. The Hon. George Brown, just arrived from Scotland, was present on Thursday afternoon.

The general opinion is, that this Exhibition excels any previous Canadian one which has ever been held. The display of cattle was exceedingly fine, the splendid animals sent by Mr. Cochrane, of Montreal, being particularly admired. Great regret was expressed that the thousand-guinea heifer was not present. Some prominent American Agriculturists were loud in their praises of the cattle. The horses were also good, and considerable progress was manifested in the sheep. The show of pigs was deficient. Notwithstanding the dryness of the summer, the Agricultural Hall was filled with fruits, vegetables, grains and flowers, of which any country in the world might justly feel proud. Every portion of the fair which depended on the farmers, was all that could be expected, and afforded evidence of the steady advancement in agriculture which Ontario is making.

Inside the Crystal Palace, the display was highly creditable, what with carriages, musical instruments, machinery, hand-looms, bolls, sewing machines, harness, Canadian oils, &c., &c., the lower flat was completely crammed. Very noticeable in this section was a large display of woollen machinery from Goldie, McCulloch & Co's foundry, Galt. Up stairs the Fine Arts took up one end, and Ladies' work the other. The paintings were numerous and well executed. The Ladies, I think, hardly equalled their displays on previous occasions.

One of the most prominent departments of the Exhibition, was the Agricultural Machinery and Implements. There was an unusually large number of ma-