

was because parties at a distance would not have the same means of judging, that I have at so much length dwelt on his letters of "A Merchant." I am quite aware of Mr. Workman's ability as a man of business and as a banker, still, when I find him in his learned Bank Reports advocating free trade in money and in his letters of "A Merchant" protesting against free trade in merchandise, it cannot be expected that I can respect his knowledge of Political Economy any more than his opinions on a branch of trade in which he has never been engaged.

Mr. Workman tells us, and I receive the information I must confess with some surpris, that of late years Europe has had "a succession of deficient harvests," which has afforded a market for our surplus cereals, and that very moderate supplies will be needed from us for some time to come, in consequence of purchases having been made in Europe for this country. Now our short supply of cereals from the crop of 1858 was only temporary, and the probability is, that the exports from this continent in the year 1860 will be greater than ever before, in contradiction to what Mr. Workman would wish to be believed, that my expectation of a great increase in our future trade is fallacious. Mr. Workman should remember that only a small part of the land in Canada or the Western States is yet under cultivation, and that the North Western region of British America has an area lying west of the 98th meridian and above the 43d parallel which is not inferior in size to the whole United States east of the Mississippi, and is perfectly adapted to the fullest occupation by cultivated nations. If this is borne in mind, and also the fact that a great trade must inevitably flow from the great valley of the Ottawa, it seems to me to show a want of foresight to doubt the future vast increase of our trade and the policy which should adapt itself to that future. The increase of trade in the last 25 years will fail in my opinion as a comparison with the probable increase of Western trade in the next 25 years, and, therefore, I think an examination of the subject will afford good grounds, even to the most cautious, for entering upon the construction of these works calculated to attract to Lower Canada a share of that vast trade which even now exists, but which flows past us and must continue to flow past us except the works recommended in these letters are constructed.

To the Government of this country, and indeed to all who earnestly desire to see British institutions perpetuated on this continent, it is of the greatest moment, to prevent the possibility of any unfavorable comparisons being justly made between British America and the United States. If it is seen that our canals, railways and material advancement do not keep pace with those interests in the American Republic, dissatisfaction and disaffection will gradually but surely grow, and the inferiority of our progress and position will be ascribed to political causes, instead of to our own want of energy and foresight in developing our great natural advantages. In this great contest of rivalry with the State of New York for the interior trade, it will not for one moment, I think, be admitted that the people of Canada are inferior in energy and enterprise to our neighbors on the other side of the line. But at present, from the absence of those works to which I have so frequently alluded, we, as Canadians, can have no opportunity for competition in the Western trade. Indeed, the prospect of our being able to attract any large share of that trade over our railroads or through canals, even when the Victoria Bridge is completed, is most unsatisfactory; and the responsibility of the Government of this country, considering the vast interests now involved and the disastrous results which must inevitably flow from a longer inaction as to these works, calculated to produce a change, is a very grave one. Believing as I do that the views I have endeavored to point out are sound, I have, as a Canadian, only done my duty in urging them on public attention.

I repeat that it depends entirely on the energy and enterprise of the merchants and residents in Lower Canada generally, and especially of Quebec and Montreal, to say, how much of that vast interior trade can be attracted to the St. Lawrence route, either for export to the Eastern States, or for shipment to Europe. Familiar as I am with all the various routes from the West to the ocean, by a long and active experience in the trade, and knowing all the advantages and capabilities of the different receiving points on the lakes and the Atlantic, I have no hesitation in stating that I know of none which possesses the extraordinary advantages which may be made available at Montreal, as a great *entrepot* for trade. With an unlimited water power at our command, with docks completed, and every facility therein