

instances in which a railroad will be better adapted for carrying freight than a canal, as in the case of all light or perishable articles, still the canal must have the preference for all heavy freights, such as bulky and staple agricultural products, &c., which it can convey at the least possible cost. The railroad may at the same time be profitably employed on the same or a parallel line in carrying valuable and perishable articles, at extra rates, when expedition is required; thus the one means of transport is auxiliary to the other.

The advocates of the proposed canal extension contend, that, up to the present time, the St. Lawrence in its contest for interior trade has been a failure, in that of the amount of tonnage moving from the west to the east, Montreal has seldom received a greater proportion than 10 per cent., as compared with that, which has passed through the State of New York.

To make a greater diversion in favour of the route down the St. Lawrence, private individuals, acting under charter, are making efforts to construct a new canal in Canada, to connect Lakes Erie and Ontario, parallel with the present Welland Canal, with its terminus on the Niagara River. Another effort is being made to connect Lake Champlain with the St. Lawrence, near Lachine.

But connected with these works, their advocates contend that the locks on the seven short canals on the St. Lawrence must be lengthened, and the rapids improved, for descending vessels, (a work which engineers have reported can be performed for \$700,000.)

These gentlemen further argue, that only when this is done will the artificial works on the St. Lawrence be made to conform to its natural magnitude, and vessels of 850 tons can sail from the head of Lake Superior or Michigan, direct to Montreal, Quebec or Halifax, or on to Lake Champlain without breaking bulk.

In descending the rapids to Montreal or Quebec, there are only 23 miles of canal navigation; to reach Lake Champlain by the proposed, the extent of canal navigation would give 57 miles. On the route from Buffalo to New York, there are 360 miles of canal, and over 200 feet of extra lockage.

But the advocates of these projects do not stop here. They argue that if the St. Lawrence route is to get the full benefit of the advantages claimed, it must increase its facilities at the Ocean Ports for loading and discharging cargo.

This brings up the somewhat vexed question of the Montreal Harbour and Docks, and Lake St. Peter navigation. We shall not, in this work, express any opinion upon the merits of the controversy, but we may supply the argument in view of the importance of the question. It is contended steam vessels of 4000 tons can now ascend from sea, at all stages of water, up to Montreal, a point nearer by 126 miles to the upper lakes than any other ocean port on the Atlantic. When the interior improvements are completed propellers of 800 and 900 tons will be employed in the carrying trade from the West, and, with such vessels, freights from the interior will be reduced to the lowest possible point, as will also be the time of transit. The cargoes of such vessels will be transferred into the large ocean steamers, and thus freights between the producer in the West, and consumer in Europe, will be reduced to the lowest rates. But it is further contended, before the full measure of these advantages can be secured to the public from these interior improvements in navigation, works of great magnitude have to be undertaken in enlarging the harbour of Montreal, and creating additional facilities for that great Western trade which now flows to New York for export, but which, these gentlemen hold, can inevitably be attracted to the St. Lawrence route.

It may be stated, as a matter of fact, that even with our present system of canals, the trade centreing at Montreal is increasing very rapidly.

In 1850 the number of ocean steamers which arrived in the Port of Montreal was 37—tonnage 45,325. In 1865 they increased to 64—tonnage 78,915, or an increase of 70 per cent. in five years. In 1869 there were 117 steamers of a tonnage of 117,965, or an increase in 4 years of 51 per cent.—so much for steamers.

Let us now examine the statistics as to ocean sailing ships. In 1860, the number entering the port was 222, tonnage 76,174. In 1865, the number was 295, tonnage 102,530, or an increase of 35 per cent. In 1869, the number had increased to 440, of a tonnage of 141,898, or a gain in 4 years of 33 per cent.

Of river craft, the number in 1860 was 4,558, tonnage 348,652. In 1865 the number was 4,771, tonnage 626,550, or an increase in five years of 80 per cent. In 1869 the number had increased to 5,866, of 721,321 tons, showing an increase in four years of 16 per cent.

The increase to the trade of Montreal, during the last ten years, in every class of vessels is at least a noticeable fact. The advocates of Montreal Harbour extension contend, it often happens, that vessels are without berth-room, and that if this is the case now, it is evident that more accommodation will be required before the expiry of the next ten years. This question of port accommodation for sea and lake vessels, is important as regards the saving of time and lessening port charges for loading and discharging. These gentlemen further set forth that at Quebec there are vast advantages to be gained by the construction of tidal docks; and that it may yet be a question whether the 800 or 900 ton propellers from the west, may not meet the ocean steamers there, rather than at Montreal. But they hold that with docks at the latter port, and with water power connected therewith, at a point where the ocean steamers can meet the interior vessels, and where the railways can be brought into connection with the ocean and interior vessels, it would seem that with diligence and energy, the friends of the Port of Montreal have it in their power to make it the great depot on this continent of the western trade.

The capital that is sought to construct the canal between the St. Lawrence and Lake Champlain is American, the Canadian Government having declined to undertake it as a Canadian work. We may state that it has met distinct opposition by advocates of the St. Lawrence route, on the ground that, as it would cheapen facilities between New York and the west, it would in that far build up the trade of New York, and render competition on the part of the Canadian rival more difficult.

The arguments on these issues resolve themselves into contradictory assertions of consequences which would flow from given facts.