

ourselves sell our flour to the Lower Provinces? For the simple reason that, instead of having to pay four millions four hundred and forty-seven thousand dollars to the United States, they would have to pay us five millions of dollars, and they would therefore refuse to buy from us. There is no such thing as sentiment in matters of business; men buy in the cheapest market. The Gulf Provinces will buy their flour from the United States so long as they can obtain it at a lower price there than in Canada; and the fact that they do obtain it cheaper from the United States is clearly demonstrated by their buying from the Americans and not from us. But a single glance at the map will account for the difference in price. I do not believe that the Intercolonial Railway can be advantageously employed for the transport of flour from Rivière du Loup to Halifax; the cost of transport over five hundred miles of railway would be too great; the water route must therefore be adopted. Kingston and Halifax are in the same latitude, between the 44th and 45th parallel. From Kingston the St. Lawrence flows undeviatingly towards the north-east, and falls into the Gulf in the 50th degree of north latitude. From that point, in order to reach the Gut of Canso, you must not only make five degrees of southing, but also make nearly three degrees of longitude to the east, and then nearly three more towards the west before reaching Halifax. Moreover, the navigation is more or less dangerous throughout. When you compare this circuitous route with the far more direct one of the United States, it is quite easy to understand why the United States can sell even our wheat to the Gulf Provinces at lower prices than we ourselves are able to do. I have attempted to reduce the commercial advantages we are promised to their proper proportion. I will now endeavor to show that we can secure every one of these advantages without the Confederation. I shall cite, for that purpose, the very words of the Honorable Minister of Finance:—

If we look at the results of the free interchange of produce between Canada and the United States, we shall find that our trade with them increased, in ten years, from less than two millions to twenty millions of dollars. If free trade has produced such results in that case, what may we not expect when the artificial obstacles which hamper free trade between us and the provinces of the Gulf shall have disappeared?

But this fine result was not obtained by means of a Confederation with the United States. What hinders us from having free

trade with the Gulf Provinces? In support of this view, I shall quote the work of the honorable member for Montmorency, not that of 1858, but that of 1865, written in favor of Confederation, pages 32 and 33, where he shews in the most conclusive manner that we have no need of Confederation to improve our commercial relations with the Gulf Provinces. It is under this head of commercial advantages that the Intercolonial Railway fitly comes in. The Honorable President of the Council tells us that he is favorable to Confederation, because it will give us a seaport at all seasons of the year—a most powerful argument, he adds, in its favor. We stand in great need of a seaport in the winter season, more especially if the United States abolish the right of transit. Absolutely, without reference to that, we require it in order to perfect our system of defence. But is Confederation necessary in order that we may build the Intercolonial Railway? Certainly not. The hon. minister, in the same speech, gives an answer to the representatives from Upper Canada complaining that the Intercolonial Railway is to be built before any scheme is entertained for opening up the North-West Territory,—“The reason is that the necessary means of constructing the Intercolonial Railway are already secured to us by the guarantee of the Imperial Government, which will enable us to obtain money at a very advantageous rate of interest.” These means were secured to us a long time since, long before the question of Confederation was agitated. I see also in a report laid before the House in a return to an address moved for last year by the Honorable Minister of Agriculture, that as soon as it became known in England that Mr. FLEMING had been appointed to report upon a plan for the Intercolonial Railway, two offers were at once made for the building of it, uncalled for by us. One is contained in Mr. C. D. ARCHIBALD'S letter of 27th August, 1863, and the other in that of Mr. C. J. BRYDGES of 4th March, 1864. Our credit is good enough to procure us the means of building the railway without having recourse to Confederation. To sum up all in few words: all the advantages are negative, that is to say, Confederation will do no harm to our interests, military or commercial, but neither do they require it. As to the inconveniences of which it may be productive, I leave them to the judgment of the House, who will decide whether they are positive. I am asked: “If you will have nothing to do with Confederation, what will you have?”