

strike may be made; but the fact remains that such has not yet been come upon, nor from the formation of the country is it likely to occur. It would, we think, be exceedingly rash—not to use a stronger term—of the shareholders, in view of their past experience, to sink further money in what has already proved to be more of a chimera than a speculation. 'Two years' work has hitherto resulted in the mining of only eighty-seven tons, and yet they are asked to further subscribe on the statement and promises of an interested party, who can show no grounds on which to support his far from unbiassed opinion. Such companies are not only disastrous to their own investors, but do incalculable harm to really genuine enterprises, which receive the cold shoulder from English capitalists, who are unable to discriminate between a loudly-trumpeted concern, whose only profits are on paper, and a really honest and remunerative investment.

In a recent issue of one of our American contemporaries reference is made to the fact that notwithstanding that the demand for mica had so increased of late, no corresponding activity was observable in its production within the limits of the Republic. In the construction of dynamos, motors, and other electric appliances, mica plays an important part on account of its flexibility and insulating properties, and with the constantly enlarging sphere of electrical mechanics, a very large quantity is annually used. For these purposes the American article is unsuited, it being found to be inferior in cleavage and flexibility, the two great requisites, and the Canadian "amber mica" is in almost universal use. This is chiefly obtained from the mines of the British Canadian Mica and Mining Co., in the Township of Villeneuve, Ottawa County, Quebec, and of the Sydenham Mica and Mining Co., in the Township of Loughboro', Ontario, although considerable quantities are also taken out by small operators in the Ottawa Valley and Kingston districts. The United States Government, in its recent enactment of the McKinley tariff, has done all in its power to foster the industry by imposing a duty of 35 per cent. upon the foreign product; but even with this assistance very little improvement is noticeable in the output of the American mines, for the reason that, protected or not protected, it is not of sufficient quality and is not therefore wanted; and the only alternatives left to manufacturers of electrical apparatus are either increasing the cost of the machines or using inferior materials; and in this latter connection it is said that some have gone the length of using paper as a substitute for mica. Reference to a recent report of the U. S. Geological Survey discloses some statistics bearing upon the subject. The production of mica in the United States in 1884 was 147,410 pounds; in 1885, 92,000 pounds; in 1886, 40,200 pounds; in 1887, 70,500 pounds; and in 1888, 48,000 pounds. The value of the amount in 1887 was \$142,250, and of that in 1888, \$70,000. These figures show conclusively that the output is on the whole falling off. Compared with these are

the imports of foreign (*i.e.*, Canadian) unmanufactured mica, which for 1884 were \$28,284; in 1885, \$28,685; in 1886, \$56,354; in 1887, \$49,085; and in 1888, \$57,541. It must, however, be noted that in the imports of the last three years, ground mica waste is included, an article which concerns about 90 per cent. of the product of the mines, and for which there is a steadily increasing demand in the manufacture of lubricants. It is evident, therefore, that left to itself and unhampered by tariff restrictions, the trend of the American demand would be almost entirely towards the Canadian "Muscovite" and amber qualities; and even under the detrimental influence of a 35 per cent. duty, there will no doubt be a large consumption of it within the Republic, while the American mines will derive little or no benefit from a stimulant that may galvanize them into a short artificial life but which can effect no permanent results upon an industry which lacks the essential element of filling a demand. Some one must pay the increased cost of the electrical apparatus or use inferior machines, and that some one is of course the purchaser, while many articles produced by electric power will be dearer, so that it appears as if no one would be benefited, but many injured directly or indirectly, by the mistaken zeal of the Ohio statesman.

The statement of the receipts of coal by water at the four principal ports on the St. Lawrence during the year just closed, given elsewhere in our columns, affords an interesting study at a moment when the question of reciprocity in this particular is being agitated. The arguments used by those who favor this movement are several. It is said that the United States is the true geographical market for Lower Port coal, and that the tariff restrictions which confine the output of Canadian collieries to their own country are vexatious and hamper the industry, whereas, if done away with, the loss of the St. Lawrence market would be more than counterbalanced by the large demand that would arise from the Atlantic ports, etc. Regarding the first, its soundness is only apparent, for it will be readily seen that the American coast market is equally contiguous to the home producing centres from which it is at present supplied, and the competition would be such that the business would not, at all events for a long time to come, amount to very much—a fact that nullifies their second proposition also. This is proved, moreover, by the light of actual experience. In the days of reciprocity there was no great prosperity, but on the contrary the industry languished and made little or no progress, and it was not until 1879, when a duty of 50 cents per ton was imposed by the Dominion Government, that affairs began to look up. Subsequently the tariff was raised to 60 cents, owing to an increase in the imposts in mining plant, etc., and since that time the annual output of Nova Scotia has steadily enlarged until it has reached the present figures. The records of the two periods of reciprocity and protection contrast strongly when placed side by side:

In 1869, the total coal sales of Nova Scotia were 511,795 tons, and in 1879, in which a duty was imposed, 688,626 tons; an increase of only 176,831 tons; while in the next ten years we find the sales have increased to 1,555,107 tons, or a gain of 866,481 tons—sufficient and incontrovertible evidence in support of our statement. It is true that the price is still low and profits are comparatively small, but the present condition of affairs is far more satisfactory to owners and employees than the old condition of things. And it is to Quebec that this is due almost entirely. Ontario is too far west for the Nova Scotian collieries to compete with American coal, even under the present duty, but the sister province has since 1879 turned altogether to the Lower Provinces for fuel, and has absorbed vast and ever-increasing quantities. In 1879, the shipments to Quebec amounted in all to only 83,710 tons; in 1889 the imports by water at the four principal St. Lawrence ports of Nova Scotian coal were 404,896 tons; and last year, owing to somewhat lower freights and a better demand, the aggregate had increased to 529,491 tons—124,595 tons more than in the preceding year. From this it may be judged that the industry is in a healthy state, and that the future shows a promise, for the loss of which no American demand that Nova Scotia could secure could compensate. Two further features in the statement of favorable character also attract attention. It will be observed that not only was the aggregate exportation greater but that every colliery participated in the gain,* the relative business of each for 1889 and 1890 showing a satisfactory balance, in some instances amounting to many thousands of tons, in favor of the latter year. And also the imports of coal from Great Britain had largely decreased and formed but an inconsiderable item in the gross total, for while in 1889 62,629 tons were brought to the Province of Quebec, only 16,974 were imported last year, showing that the Nova Scotia article is growing in favor as well as in demand. From these considerations, it is plain that the collieries in the Lower Provinces have much to lose and nothing to gain by any change from the present state, and on the subject of reciprocity a "masterly inactivity" will be found the most profitable attitude in the end.

The case of *Dansereau et al v. the Dominion Phosphate and Mining Company, limited*, was resumed on the 15th instant, in the Supreme Court at Aylmer, Mr. Justice Malhiot presiding. Mr. J. M. McDougall appeared for the plaintiffs, and Mr. J. R. Fleming, Q.C., for the defendants. It was commenced in May, 1892, but owing to the difficulty in collecting witnesses, and the absence at one time and another of the principals, it was adjourned until the above date. The history of the suit is as follows: In 1883 the phosphate mine owned by plaintiffs on what is known as the Chapleau lot, situate in the Township of Portland East, Ottawa County, Province of Quebec, was closed down, the mining plant being left on the property. Adjoining this property is the North Star mine, operated by the Dominion Phosphate