

headgear, and these owed \$158,368. So these 85 persons owed over \$400,000—something like \$5,000 each. Tailors and tailoresses, man milliners and woman milliners, getting credit at the rate of \$5,000 apiece and failing at the rate of one a day. What will the harvest be? Well, let us change the subject!"

Comparing the figures given above for April, May and June, 1897, with the corresponding period of 1896, we find that in the three months of last year there were 384 failures, with \$2,815,249 of liabilities. And for the half-year ended with June last the total was 1,042 failures of traders, owing \$8,124,851, as compared with 1,122 failures, owing \$8,560,789 in the first half of 1896. The assets were about the same in amount in each half year, being \$6,200,251 in 1897 and \$6,214,202 in half year of 1896. These figures include both manufacturing and trading concerns. At this rate we may look for an aggregate of liabilities of failed traders by the end of this year equal to fifteen or sixteen millions of dollars. The average aggregate for the last dozen years has been \$15,980,000, ranging from \$8,743,000 in 1885 to \$17,858,000 in 1890, and \$12,683,000 in 1893. This is a melancholy record, and tells us what has been true at any time these twenty years, that there are too many traders in Canada for the business to be done, and that there is much need for a revision of our credit system.

#### MARITIME PROVINCE INDUSTRIES.

Although wooden shipbuilding has gone down of late years, we must not think that the Maritime Provinces of Canada, so named because "bordering on the sea," as one meaning of the word maritime is, are likely to consent without an effort to relinquish the important place given them by Nature in their geographical situation. Our brothers of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Bay of Fundy, and the islands of Cape Breton and Prince Edward, are largely navigators; many of their merchants are world-wide merchants; and so long as there is coal, and fish and timber to be carried outward, and natural products of other countries to be brought to our shores, they are likely to take a hand in the transport of such merchandise. If wooden ships are no longer economically possible, they will build—or buy—iron ones, perhaps steel ones. But wooden shipbuilding is not dead yet.

A gentleman well known in mining circles of Quebec and Nova Scotia, Mr. R. J. Leckie, of Torbrook and Truro, N.S., while in Montreal the other day, was interviewed by representatives of Montreal and Toronto journals upon present industrial conditions in the Maritime Provinces. And he stated some facts that are well worth repeating here, as to the enterprise of the stalwart folk of our Eastern provinces of the Dominion. To the question whether Nova Scotia, so rich in coal and iron, would ever do much in iron shipbuilding, Mr. Leckie replied:—

I think it is doubtful, because the plant required is so very expensive that I am afraid the cost would be somewhat beyond our means. There are a number of people, however, in the Lower Provinces who have become owners of iron steamers, built, of course, on the Clyde and elsewhere, and I learn they are doing very well. Amongst others are J. W. Carmichael, ex-M.P. for Pictou, as well as several Yarmouth and New Brunswick firms. Messrs. W. Thompson & Son, of St. John, N.B., are said to own three iron steamers, and I understand that the last one built has cleared 25 per cent. of her total cost in one year. These boats are about 5,000 tons, use 22 tons of coal daily, and steam 10½ knots an hour. Generally, as in the case of the old-time sailing vessels, the captains are part owners, and they being able to do a great deal of the ship's business at each port, they are run much cheaper than the ordinary liners.

Another matter which Mr. Leckie referred to is the Greenland trade, which it appears has created a demand for a number of staunch wooden ships, two or three having been lately built in the Bay of Fundy. These vessels are used to bring cryolite from Greenland to New York, and

a certain quantity has been sent to Cleveland, Ohio, *via* the St. Lawrence. Cryolite, a fluoride of sodium and aluminum, is used in the manufacture of soap, alum, soda and cryolite glass. A different variety of it is obtained in the Ural Mountains of Russia, but in Greenland it is found associated with galena, pyrites and chalybite, and there is a big mine of it at Ivigtot in South Greenland.

Commercially and industrially the Maritime Provinces are by no means badly off just now; of late they have been doing better, we believe, relatively than either Quebec or Ontario. Nova Scotia has varied and valuable resources, notably, coal, iron and gold, as well as fish and timber. Opinions differ as to what the effect will be of the new tariff on her West India trade, as well as her iron industries at Londonderry and Ferrona, but the output of coal keeps up, and indeed is likely to be larger than before. The gold quartz of Nova Scotia, which even thirty years ago was worked at a profit, is now, from the use of modern economic methods, on the eve of greater activity in production than ever. Mr. Leckie speaks in most hopeful terms of the present comparatively prosperous condition of the gold mining properties in the counties of Halifax, Guysboro, Hants, Queens and other sections of the province. "All the mines now being worked," he says, "are paying; they are mostly owned by our own people, and, being run with improved machinery, the result is generally a profitable investment."

#### GOLD MINING IN WESTERN ONTARIO.

A well-known gentleman of Montreal, Col. J. D. Crawford, spent some time in the Lake of the Woods mining district of Ontario, and was present at the mining convention at Rat Portage in early June. He appears to have been much impressed with what he saw and learned during his stay of the capacities of that region in the way of mineral production. Indeed, he expresses his regret that in the comprehensive review of the general situation given by the managers of the Bank of Montreal and Merchants' Bank at their annual meetings, no mention whatever was made of Western Ontario, or of her vast and, as yet, largely unexplored gold fields.

Col. Crawford reminds us that a number of men of large experience in South Africa, Australia, Mexico and other great gold fields, stated in the convention that they "knew of no country in the world possessing greater natural advantages or brighter possibilities as a gold producer." Their opinion is that "under proper management the district named would probably soon become one of the most productive gold fields yet discovered, owing to its wonderful deposits, which can be cheaply mined and reduced, its accessibility at all seasons, its cheap land, labor, timber for milling purposes and fuel, and its abundant supply of good food and pure water." Such advantages are at least likely to attract the enterprise and the capital of men in the Old World as well as the new, who are on the look-out for profitable investments.

In a letter to the Montreal Gazette, Col. Crawford compares mining in this district of Western Ontario with mining in the United States, as a profitable enterprise, basing his conclusions on the opinion expressed by Mr. N. C. Westerfield in the Winnipeg Colonist. This gentleman shows that "at the present moment the cost of mining, milling, amalgamating and retorting is \$4 per ton at the Sultana mine, Lake of the Woods. When