

come up next session, for he mentioned "a year or two" as the time to elapse before a general discussion on the question would come up, meaning, presumably, in the legislature.

### SHIPPING IN THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

A remarkable improvement in rates of freight for sea-going ships has been a feature of the year that is past. Our Maritime Provinces, being large owners of shipping, have profited in a marked degree by the rise in freights. Unfortunately, however, there have been severe losses to shipping because of unusually numerous wrecks and disasters. Saint John alone, according to one report, lost forty vessels of 17,348 tons in all, valued at half a million dollars. So while owners have profited in one way, either they or the marine insurance companies have suffered in another. In answer to the question: Will shipbuilding revive in New Brunswick? the *Telegraph* replies, "The outlook is not very promising, but is no worse, to say the least, than was the prospect of a revival in freights a year ago. The boom in freights would furnish a direct impulse to the old industry of shipbuilding if other conditions were the same as they were fifteen or twenty years ago. But the ship carpenters have been dispersed, the yards dismantled, and the master builders have turned their attention to other callings."

According to the annual stock-taking of Maritime Province shipping, this year there is no gain in aggregate tonnage, but on the contrary a loss of 33,076 tons, which is, however, less than that of the previous year. This is matter of regret, when we remember what a proud record has been that of our eastern provinces in the matter of shipping. But in these days of iron and steel ships we cannot reasonably expect growth in the wooden fleet that has carried the name and flag of Canada to every part of the world. What we need to do now is to build iron ones. There are published in the *Morning Chronicle* of Halifax tabular statements which show the shipping tonnage of each port of registration in the Maritime Provinces—the number and tonnage of vessels registered on 31st December, 1887, and same date of 1888. For these, however, we have not room. In this table, New Brunswick shows the greatest decrease, 15,333 tons, only one port in that province, Richibucto, showing any increase. Five ports in Nova Scotia show an increase—Arischat, Liverpool, Port Hawkesbury, Shelburne, and Sydney—giving a total of 1,313 tons, as compared with a total shrinkage of 16,611 tons in the other ports.

A summary of tonnage of the thirty odd ports in the three provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island shows as under:

	No. Vessels.		Tonnage.	
	1887.	1888.	1887.	1888.
Nova Scotia.....	2,848	2,840	502,663	487,365
N. Brunswick..	1,027	1,008	255,121	239,788
P. E. Island ...	225	218	29,031	26,586
Grand total ..	4,100	4,066	786,815	753,739
	4,032	.....	753,739	.....
Total decrease.	34	.....	33,076	.....

There were thus 215 vessels of 53,039 tons struck off the registry during the twelve months as being lost, dismantled, or sold, and to replace these only 181 vessels of 19,963 tons were built. A little calculation shows that the average tonnage of the ships removed from the registry was 246 tons, while the tonnage of those which replaced them was only 110 tons each. This makes it clear that our Maritime Provinces are ceasing to turn out from their shipyards large ships, and are building mainly schooners and brigs of small tonnage, for coasting or West India trade. If we take time to analyse the table giving particulars of each port, we shall find where the big ships hail from. Halifax, with all her proud record of 913 sail, does not take a high position as to tonnage, for the average of her craft is only 78 tons. Similarly, the fishing craft hailing from ports along the south shore of Nova Scotia, west of Halifax, Liverpool, Lunenburg, and Shelburne, are small, averaging from 80 to 87 tons. The like may be said of Digby. The town of Yarmouth, which used to be considered a marvel as a seaport, and indeed still is, shows a list of 347 sail, of an average burthen of 321 tons. But Windsor heads the list of N. S. ports. To pursue the calculation, we find:

N. S.		Average ton- nage per Vessel.
Windsor .....	122,906	653
Yarmouth .....	111,338	321
Halifax .....	71,373	78
Maitland .....	37,731	920
Pictou .....	28,451	338
Parrsboro.....	23,111	256
Lunenburg .....	21,381	80
Annapolis.....	13,042	172
Digby .....	12,192	75
Shelburne.....	10,465	87
N. B.		
St. John .....	194,254	325
Dorchester .....	16,785	763
Chatham .....	12,964	73
St. Andrews.....	6,076	35
Richibucto .....	4,294	252
P. E. Island.....		122

Proceeding to Bay of Fundy ports, we find, on the Nova Scotia side, Annapolis with a fleet of 172 tons average; Parrsboro, say 256 tons each. Then Windsor comes, heading the list with 188 of a fleet, of a much larger capacity. But the ports which are credited with the largest vessels are Maitland, on Cobequid Bay, and Dorchester, on Chignecto Bay. Their averages are 920 ton, and 763 tons each. Dorchester's record shows two ships, of 3,123 tons, eleven barques, of 11,093 tons, one barquentine, two brigantines, and the rest schooners. So these, doubtless, with St. John and Windsor, are the ports which build the big ships.

Saint John is the banner port of all our Atlantic sea board, for the registered capacity of her 598 craft is 194,254 tons, reduced, we are sorry to see, from 616 craft of 204,256 tons a year before. The maximum of St. John's tonnage was reached in 1885, when she had 802 vessels of all kinds, with a total of 369,201 tons. In the thirteen years between 1875 and 1862 her shipping had practically doubled. The vessels credited to Prince Edward Island are 218 in number, with an average burthen of 122 tons, their total tonnage being 26,586. We are not furnished as yet with any particulars of these as to ports.

### THE FAILURE LIST.

In the year 1881 there were only 635 mercantile failures reported in Canada, involving liabilities of \$5,751,000. But year by year they swelled in number and volume for the period of four years ended with 1884, and the last year of that period showed \$18,939,000 as the aggregate of failure liabilities. The next year there was a decline to \$8,743,000, or less than half, but the total increased in 1886 to \$10,171,000, and in 1887 to \$16,070,000. This last figure was exceptional, however, and occasioned largely by the Maritime Bank stoppage and the lumber failures, etc., that ensued upon it. Probably \$11,000,000 would have been the aggregate of failures in that year but for the disaster referred to. Now, again, the total goes up, for the figures of 1888, as reported by Messrs. Dun, Wiman & Co., give \$13,974,000 as the amount of liabilities, and 1,667—also an increase—as the number of failures. Particulars by provinces will be found below:—

Province.	1888. No. failures.	Total Liabilities.	1887. No. failures.	Total Liabilities.
Ontario.....	915	\$6,701,343	633	\$5,357,375
Quebec .....	482	4,466,824	390	4,085,928
New Brunswick...	65	741,691	89	5,350,115
Nova Scotia .....	126	1,305,503	120	716,660
P. E. Island.....	8	148,678	13	162,600
British Columbia	19	128,803	25	135,950
Manitoba .....	53	478,945	37	261,769
Total .....	1,667	\$13,974,787	1,366	\$16,070,595

An increase of failures, in both number and amount, is thus shown in every province except New Brunswick. A comparison of last year with the previous eight may be of interest, as showing something of periodicity in failures:

In 1880 there were	907 failures,	\$ 7,988,000
" 1881 " "	635 "	5,751,000
" 1882 " "	787 "	8,587,000
" 1883 " "	1,379 "	15,872,000
" 1884 " "	1,308 "	18,939,000
" 1885 " "	1,247 "	8,743,000
" 1886 " "	1,233 "	10,171,000
" 1887 " "	1,366 "	16,070,000
" 1888 " "	1,667 "	13,974,000

Some particulars are given of assets in Maritime Province failures, compared with liabilities. Thus:

FAILURES IN NOVA SCOTIA.			
	No.	Liabilities.	Assets.
1888.....	126	\$1,305,503	\$664,200
1887.....	120	716,860	375,570
Increase 1888...	6	\$588,743	\$288,630
FAILURES IN P. E. ISLAND.			
	No.	Liabilities.	Assets.
1888.....	8	\$148,678	\$72,000
1887.....	18	162,000	48,000
Decrease 1888..	5	\$13,922 Inc.	\$14,000

### THE LONDON ASYLUM CASE.

Our readers will remember that a little more than a year ago a fire occurred in the building used as kitchen and laundry at the lunatic asylum at London, Ont. This building is connected with the main asylum by a brick passageway, the distance between them being about fifty feet. The policy of insurance covers the main building of the Asylum, no mention being made of the kitchen and laundry. There were twenty-six insurance companies interested in the risk. Two of them paid their proportion of the loss, the other twenty-four refusing to pay on the ground that the