

The report of the Commissioners sent to Scotland and Holland to enquire into the methods of the European fisheries and curing establishments will probably prove to be of considerable value to the Maritime Provinces if good use is made of the information acquired. The Commissioners seem to have come to the conclusion that Canadian herring is not properly cured, and that its commercial value consequently stands lower than it should do. Scotch methods of curing are highly praised, and it is recommended that a Scotch herring-cooper and a crew of Scotch herring-gutting girls be imported to go from point to point to afford instruction in the Scotch modes, and that the business of catching herring be encouraged. It is further advised that fishermen cease to be their own curers and that merchant fish curers take up the business. An Inspector of herring-fishery is also advocated. It is probable that these are suggestions quite worthy of serious attention.

It is reported that a new departure is being made in the fresh-beef business which, if successful, will have the effect of practically driving the Chicago article out of the Canadian market. There was, the *Chronicle* says, to arrive at St. John last Monday week, a consignment direct from Winnipeg over the C. P. R. of three carloads of Manitoba beef, each car containing forty-five carcasses. The beef is said to equal in quality the Chicago article, and can be put on the market at the same figure. Some of it is to be forwarded to Halifax. The C. P. R. cars are said to be specially fitted in a manner superior to anything in use on other roads. We trust the venture will prove a success as, in the event of its doing so, it will form an important example of the ability of our provinces for mutual supply. It is infinitely preferable that the money spent by, say the Maritime Provinces, for such external supplies as they may require, should go into the pockets of our fellow-countrymen in our N. W. possessions than into those of the giant establishments of a foreign city.

A movement of considerable import is noticed by the *St. John Evening Gazette*. A meeting of master carpenters and proprietors of planing mills was, it appears, recently held at which the following motion was adopted: "That we accede to the request of the men that nine hours constitute a day's work on and after April 1st next, but the men to work ten hours each day should any employer so desire, and all wages to be paid by the hour." This is another step towards the general recognition of the claims of working men to hours of labor which will not entirely debar them from some leisure time in the twenty-four hours, and consequently some opportunity for recreation and culture, which latter is undoubtedly desired by many. That the principle of a curtailment of the old hours of labor will soon be universally admitted is, we consider, assured by the late great strikes in England and the socialist successes in Germany, and our own employers are no doubt acting wisely in accepting the situation betimes, and not waiting to be driven to acquiescence by all the evils and exasperations of a strike.

Our esteemed contemporary the *Militia Gazette*, noticing our appeal to it to aid us in advocating the claims of the D. A. G's. to the rank of full Colonel, evidently inadvertently, slightly misinterprets the spirit of our remarks. It was only by way of illustration that we cited the cases of the Deputy-Minister and the Surgeon-General as instances of a disparity unwarranted by relative positions, we are not aware that those particular appointments have in themselves occurred to any of the D. A. G's. as a grievance. The unimpeachable grounds on which we have advocated the concession of rank are the facts of their being virtual Commanders-in-Chief of large districts of country containing bodies of troops which, to say the least, exceed on an average the usual proportions of strong brigades, and in many cases show divisional strength, (the Home authorities have appointed Brigadier-Generals of Volunteers (the rank which we, indeed, think ought to be accorded to our D. A. G's.) and that the limitation to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel places our national officers in an invidious position in relation to officers of the Imperial service when they come in contact.

Unhesitatingly as we have always acknowledged and maintained the benefit to Canada at large of the splendid enterprise of the C. P. R., we have taken more than one occasion to deprecate anything like laying the Dominion at the feet of a monopoly. Consequently we heartily welcomed the intelligence that the Grand Trunk was about to make a decided effort to reach the sea by a comparatively short line of its own, which should also have the advantages of being entirely within Canadian territory, and of seeking our own city as its terminus. We are happy to learn that the projected direct line from Edmunston to Moncton is awakening a considerable amount of attention and is commending itself to the good will and adherence of the commercial and general public. This line, under the name of the Temiscouata Railway, is already in operation from River du Loup to Edmunston and the map shows an almost bee-line thence to Moncton, a distance of 209 miles as already tentatively surveyed, with every probability of being decreased to 199 miles. This is the distance which will have to be constructed. The reports of the preliminary survey are that the country through which the line will pass is for by far the greater part well adapted for farming settlement, abounding in timber, and presenting but few engineering difficulties of any importance. The comparative distances in connection with the projected line between Halifax and Montreal have been given as follows:—By Intercolonial Railway 856; by the Canadian Pacific 756; and by the Grand Trunk proposed new line 753 miles, with a probability of its reduction by ten miles. We trust to see the new enterprise of the Grand Trunk pushed forward without delay. Competition is the life of a country, and the advent of the Grand Trunk to Halifax will be cordially welcomed.

While Russia is said to be massing troops on the Roumanian frontier, and to have made a heavy pecuniary demand on Bulgaria, the recent atrocious massacre of Siberian exiles, and the unspeakable atrocities inflicted on certain ladies by the Governor of a Russian prison, have not only horrified the rest of Europe, but will undoubtedly intensify the determination and activity of the Nihilists, while in the face of such crimes they will secure a more world-wide sympathy. Under the extreme centralisation of the Russian Government, the ultimate responsibility of such deeds rests with the Czar, and, if the life of that miserable potentate has (partly from his own cowardice) been hitherto that of a toad under a harrow, it would seem to be quite on the cards now that some of the teeth of the harrow will shortly bite as effectually as they did his far braver and more worthy father.

Like every other occurrence or infliction which has gained any amount of notoriety, the influenza epidemic has brought into the field the usual crop of fussy faddists, who are eager to ventilate some absurd notion which they flatter themselves has an air of originality. Some of these wise (and delicate) folks have discovered that the raising of the hat to ladies in the street "may be attended with no small risk," "and that the influenza has not been reported as raging very seriously in the turbanned orient, so that there may be something to say for the new keep-our-hats-on movement." Granting that there may be some risk in a frequent uncovering of the head while the epidemic is prevalent and the weather cold, the attempt to constitute a temporary precaution a permanent abolition of a convenient custom of courtesy is, we think, as ill judged as it is likely to be futile. The manners of the day are by no means too much overlaid with the little formalities which are the outward expression of deference and respect; the raising of the hat is a convenient outward sign of the regard which men of breeding rightly feel to be due to woman as woman, and we should not only be very sorry to see the custom decline but we should like to know how otherwise a lady is to be recognized in the street, unless by something like a modified military salute which, we think, would hardly be satisfactory. What a deal of unnecessary consideration of trivialities is forced upon an unwilling world by inane *quid-nuncs* who, it would seem, can have nothing to do but to ventilate superfluous and irritating fads.

We have before us the new catalogue of the Legislative Library, compiled and arranged by the talented gent eman who holds the position of Librarian. We have said "the new catalogue," but in point of fact there has not hitherto existed anything more than a list, destitute of system, arrangement, information or references. Mr. Crofton's work has consequently been a very laborious one, but it is done with such masterly completeness that we can only wish the collection itself were more worthy of the arduous work bestowed upon it. Every work of any sort of consequence is indexed under three headings—the author's name, the title of the book, and the subject; and the subject groups have been subdivided into the several branches treated of as, under the heading "Law," Bankruptcy, Insolvency, etc.; Criminal, Equity, International law, etc.; are thrown into distinct lists. The cross references are voluminous, and much information calculated to assist the searcher and reader is copiously scattered through the volume in notes which are placed just where they ought to be. Mr. Crofton has worked under many disadvantages, but he has, as might have been expected from him, produced a catalogue of the first order. In his preface the Librarian alludes to the efficient aid he has received from his assistant Mr. H. Piets, a young gentleman who gives promise of one day making his mark in literary paths. The Legislature and the reading public will, whenever they avail themselves of the privileges of the library, feel that they owe to Mr. Crofton's knowledge and ability a considerable debt of gratitude. The catalogue is exceedingly well printed and handsomely bound.

Nostrums for certain diseases, with some apparent guarantees of experience of their effects, appear from time to time in the secular press, while medical journals are, so far as we are aware, silent as to the curative virtues attributed to them. Supposing them, or any of them, to be of real value, there are many valid reasons why the profession should be slow to afford its sanction to them, yet it is impossible to say when private or local experience may not be justified. We are, it is true, unable to pronounce on the reliability of those who in an ordinary newspaper paragraph vouch for the soundness of a generally unknown remedy, yet there is always a possibility of the validity of the information. Diphtheria is so fatal a malady that we have already (in our issue of the 17th January) noticed an alleged remedy which seemed to bear an aspect of considerable plausibility. We now notice another which appears to present a likelihood of efficiency, and at all events has every indication of being given in good faith. It is said to have been known and used by the colored people of Louisiana for years, and is nothing more nor less than the pure juice of pineapple. "The remedy is not mine," the gentleman quoted as authority is reported to have said, "it has been used by negroes in the swamps down South for years. One of my children was down with diphtheria and was in a critical condition. An old colored man who heard of the case asked if we had tried pineapple juice. We tried it, and the child got well. I have known it tried in hundreds of cases. I have told my friends about it whenever I heard of a case, and never knew it to fail. You get a ripe pineapple, squeeze out the juice and let the patient swallow it. The juice is of so corrosive a nature that it will cut out the diphtheretic mucus, and if you will take the fruit before it is ripe and give the juice to a person whose throat is well, it makes the mucous membrane of his throat sore." We do not of course pretend to offer an opinion but merely give the statement for what it may be worth.