

opportunity for his wife to see him in Columbus, and he repeated the order to the Marshal to convey him to goal at once.

Thus ends one of the saddest chapters of gambling, linked with crime, in the present century; but the strange and criminous infatuation that takes hold of men who once taste the intoxicating cup of illegitimate speculation is unaccountable. There was Harper, worth over a million dollars in his own right, the managing director of the foremost bank of Ohio, receiving a handsome income and married to one of Cincinnati's fairest daughters, with a fine promising boy as his heir, and yet, with all the happiness that a prince need crave for, we find this mad gambler risking it all on a reckless and criminal speculative throw, with other people's money as well as his own. He threw and lost, and in that headlong fall which swiftly followed was buried his name and character for ever. To his beautiful and devoted wife and promising boy we hope the world will be kind. We also trust that Harper's fate will be a warning to others who are amenable to the wreck and ruin which lurk within the gambling spirit of the age."

The Intercolonial railway continues to be run as a government work, and, it is claimed, at a loss. The proposition that was alleged last winter to have been made to sell it to a wealthy German syndicate has not been carried out, though it is stated that negotiations looking to that end are not as yet concluded. If the German syndicate shows that it is able and willing to go earnestly to work to develop the vast iron and other mineral resources of the northern and eastern portions of this province, and of New Brunswick, its proposals, if not such as to entail loss to the country, might be entertained, provided also that the Government retain guarantees against oppressive freight and passenger rates. We are influenced in this view of the matter, by the fact that the usefulness of the Intercolonial as a government railway, will be practically brought to an end by the completion of the Short Line Railway, which event is expected to occur early next spring. The I. C. R. cannot then keep the field as a competitor for the ordinary freight and passenger traffic, and must depend mainly on local business, the development of which in turn depends on the energy with which the great mineral, agricultural, and other resources with which the section of country through which it passes abounds. In connection with this railway we recall with gratification the fact that about a year ago THE CRITIC became convinced that there was much less rolling stock in possession of the railway than the requirements of the public demanded, and mentioned the fact. The superintendent denied that this was true, but on our insisting that we were well informed, an enquiry was instituted, with the result that \$300,000 worth of new rolling stock was ordered to be at once procured. In this instance THE CRITIC rendered good and disinterested service to the public. It feels sufficiently rewarded in having benefited the community.

Appropos of railway business in this city, it is daily becoming more and more necessary that very much larger terminal accommodations should be provided at the earliest moment. The proposition that the government purchase the block of land and buildings thereon bounded by North, Lockman, Cornwallis and Upper Water Streets for railway purposes, seems to hang fire. We are free to express our opinion that this is a mistake on the part of the Minister of Railways. The rapid increase of freight coming to Halifax for shipment to and from Europe, and the growth of our inter-provincial trade should be promptly met by the railway department with generous accommodations in the way of warehouses, rails, etc. If this trade continues to increase at the present rate, even the block spoken of will soon prove too small to facilitate the movement of goods as the public has a right to expect and demand, and further extension will become necessary in either a southerly or a westerly direction. The number of steamers arriving, either to discharge or receive freight, is growing at a rapid ratio, and ample accommodations must be provided at once. Neglect of the business necessities of Halifax must result in this progressive age in shunting the handling trade that is now being attracted here to other ports, and it will be extremely difficult to bring it back if we once lose it.

A good deal of trouble has been caused in the line of lighting the streets, through the attempt of the Gas Company to recapture the contract, and to obstruct others who tendered for the work. This attempt was aided—doubtless unconsciously—by the Board of Works, in failing to take a decided stand, and the city was unlighted for several weeks. At last the new contractors have got matters straightened out, and are putting in satisfactory work.

The Nova Scotia Telephone Company has become a reality during the past year, and is rapidly making its connections with all parts of the province. It promises not only to greatly facilitate the transaction of business in different parts of Nova Scotia, but also to make handsome returns to its shareholders.

It is, of course, impossible to say, until something is known of the results (if any) of the fishery negotiations: whether any settlement is, or is not, as far off as ever. The positions that both countries occupy are—to say the least—undignified. Canada, with somewhat of the disposition of a Shylock, requires her "ounce of flesh," and, resting on the literal rendering of a treaty now growing old, is not altogether clear of the imputation of disregarding the courtesy demanded by the comity of civilized nations, and the rights of peaceful neighbors. On the other hand, the United States plainly declares that it will not submit to the pretentious claims of a "colony," and insists that vessels bearing the "gridiron" shall receive the same kindly and friendly treatment in Canadian ports that they do in say Chinese waters. The growing feeling of irritation led to the appointment of an international commission, which has held several formal meetings in Washington. But, as it has been distinctly announced that no intimation of the nature of its deliberations will be made until they are concluded, there is no safe ground for the surmises indulged in by the press of either political party. There is, however, a very prevalent impression that the

American diplomatists have proved unyielding, and that if an agreement is to be, it can only be by Canada abating her claims "under the treaty," and making concessions to the spirit of modern international ideas of comity and justice. Meanwhile, it is interesting to note that if the American catch of mackerel has been phenomenally small this year, that fact has not in any perceptible degree increased ours. We have had more vessels and more men, with the best and latest appliances at our command, employed in the fisheries than ever before, but the result has not been such as we were induced to believe that it would be. If we have, as the Americans contend, netted the part of the "dog in the manger," our action cannot be said to have, so far, proved a "conspicuous success." The Commission has adjourned to meet again on Saturday week, but we are not sanguine that any practical results will be reached. The Americans "want the earth," and the water as well, and are strong in their belief that patient persistence and uncompromising self-assertion will secure both, as far as this continent and its surroundings are concerned.

President Cleveland, in his annual message to Congress, strongly advocated such a modification of the tariff, as to almost amount to an advocacy of free trade. This has alarmed the large majority of the nation, who are firmly wedded to the idea of "America for Americans, and no concessions to foreigners," and is not at all unlikely to secure the defeat of his party at the polls next November. Meanwhile, any recommendations that he or his cabinet may make will very probably be viewed with strong suspicion by Congress, and, especially so, any suggestions looking towards better relations with Canada. Although, as we have got on so far well enough without intimate trade connections with our southern neighbors, it cannot be denied that, with the expansion of our trade, and the development of our natural resources, we should be all the better for larger possible outlets. It should be the aim of our government to supply us with these in any way not incompatible with our honor as a people.

In civic matters the year has been somewhat unsatisfactory. A good Mayor and Council were elected, and they have displayed unusual assiduity in attention to business, but their efforts have been to a large extent neutralized by the action of irresponsible parties, who have occupied the time of meetings by complaints and petitions, to which the Council felt obliged to lend an ear, though individually its members must have felt and known that no sense of reason guided the memorialists.

The iron tariff was largely increased at the late session of the Dominion Parliament, which was held last spring. This increase was greeted with unanimous disapproval from persons in the trade of all shades of political opinion, and by the independent portion of the press. The result was, that an Order-in-Council was issued suspending the operation of the new tariff as respects iron, steel, and cognate materials, till the end of the fiscal year. This gave importers who had ordered their stocks before the change a chance to equalize their calculations with the realities. Since then, the Council has been engaged in "tinkering" with the tariff, and nearly every *Gazette* announces some changes, so that importers are kept in a state of uncertainty as to what rate they will have to pay on their goods when they come to hand. This uncertainty does not stimulate enterprise.

However, despite the idiosyncracies of the various governments ("two numerous to mention") by which we have the happiness and privilege of being ruled, this City and Province are in a prosperous state, and we are justified in indulging in the brightest anticipations for the successful business events of the incoming year.

THE WEEK.

As is natural when the year draws towards its end, business assumes a quieter aspect, but in Halifax a fair movement has transpired for the season. No change worthy of note has occurred in the leading staple lines, and prices have remained on the whole, stationary. Payments generally are well met, and few complaints on that ground are made.

The following are the assignments and business changes in this Province during the past week:—Murray & McMillan, victuallers, New Glasgow, dissolved, Ernest Murray continues and liquidates; McLennan & Gillis, grocers, Antigonish, dissolved, R. L. McLean continues and liquidates; Benjamin & Marks, Brookfield, dissolved, Robt Benjamin continues; Hill & O'Brien, livery, Halifax, dissolved, Frank Hill continues; Mulgrave Woollen Mill Co., manufacturers, Upper Stewiacke, winding up business; Stephen Hilsley, general store, Berwick, about retiring from business; Wm. Matheson, general store, Thomson, assigned to O. C. Cummings.

DRY GOODS.—Trade in this line has ruled quiet, except in some lines of holiday goods. Travellers are mostly at home, and will not start out again till about the second week in the new year. The stocks to be carried over will not be excessive. Everything is in good trim for the opening season.

IRON, HARDWARE AND METALS.—A fair trade has been done in iron and hardware, and prices have a firm tone. Glasgow warrents are cabled at 42s. 9d., Chili copper bars at £80 7s. 6d., and tin at £166.

BREADSTUFFS.—Flour has been quiet and steady, with prices unchanged. The demand is light, and confined to small lots. Beerbolm's table says:—"Cargoes off coast—wheat, firm; corn, nothing offering. Cargoes on passage and for prompt shipment—wheat held steadily; corn, dull. Liverpool spot wheat, firmer, do. do. corn, strong. Wheat and flour in Paris, firm. Liverpool standard California wheat, including club white, 6s. 6d. to 6s. 9d.; mixed maize, 1s. 11d.; Canadian peas, 5s. 6d." There has been a stronger feeling in the Chicago wheat market, and prices have slightly advanced. Quotations are 77½c. for January; 78½c. for February; 81½c. May. Corn has been firm at 48½c. January; 49½c. February, and 51½c. May. Oats have been unchanged, and stand at 30½c. January and February, and 32c. May. The New York wheat market was stronger.

PROVISIONS.—Owing to the late unfavorable weather for packing, packers