

numbers goes; but it has this further effect, that the influx of the newcomers tends to lower the standard of the comfort which has hitherto prevailed among the workmen. Ever since the days of Malthus, political economists have been telling laborers to check the natural increase of their numbers, for the purpose of preventing ruinous competition, want, starvation, or even worse. The workmen have learnt to apply the same rule to the multiplication of workmen by means of immigration. But the objection may be carried too far for the general welfare. Our correspondent touches a tender spot when he refers to the labor of Chinese and Japanese in mines; but passing over the particular instance which he mentions of mining coal at Nanaimo, the fact remains that there are certain poor mines which can be worked only by this cheap labor. Surely the white miners, who could not make a living in these mines, should not envy the Chinaman or the Japanese miner who can make such a living by working therein as corresponds with the rule of comfort which he is willing to abide by.

It is rather late in the day to talk of bonusing the business of building wooden ships. Still such a course does find advocates in British Columbia. The comparatively isolated position of the province is pleaded, so as to make a special case. This had to be done, when the decline of wooden ship-building, once an extensive industry in the east, is considered. We do not remember that, at any time, this industry was bonused in Quebec or the Maritime Provinces. The notion of bonusing, in British Columbia, may be taken as part of the current theory of protection, which has been so extensively reduced to practice in all parts of the Dominion. And of the various forms of protection, the bonus is not the most objectionable. It has something, relatively speaking, in its favor that is wanting to other forms. In giving a bonus you know the extent of the cost, which is not the case in some other forms of protection. British Columbia, we are reminded, possesses suitable materials for building wooden ships; but this facility rather tells against the claim than in its favor. Royalties paid upon increased shipments, some argue, would partly recoup the bonus. This is a question for the province. The bonus is asked as a temporary thing, as all such aids are, but experience shows that once granted they are never voluntarily surrendered. The bonus is relied on to attract foreign capital, but if it were to be only temporary, the bait would scarcely take. It is asked as a means of reaching foreign markets, vessels not being always procurable to carry cargoes abroad. If so things cannot be said to be in a satisfactory condition, but does it follow that there is not a better way out of the difficulty than resort to the bonusing of wooden ships?

#### SOME DRY GOODS VIEWS.

One of the most significant paragraphs in the annual report of the dry goods section of the Toronto Board of Trade is that in which the opinion is stated that Canadian stocks of dry goods, both wholesale and retail, are much smaller than they were a year ago. We agree with the conclusion drawn that the trade of 1895 must benefit by this condition, supposing the statement to be true, which there is much reason to believe. The year 1894, it is confessed, "has been an unsatisfactory one from a money-making point of view," but the chairman congratulates his auditory that they have passed through a very trying time with their ranks unbroken. Having regard to the untoward conditions prevailing all the world over, Canada has done well. "That our banking institutions, as well as our large mercantile houses, have been conducted on sound lines, and with considerable prudence and foresight," says Mr. Ander-

son, "is evident from the fact that at no time during the past year did any panic exist, and no failures have occurred amongst the wholesale houses." Referring to the marked decrease in failures of traders in the United States and the increase of them in Canada, the report says: "As we in Canada generally follow about a year behind the United States either in prosperity or adversity, I am hopeful that the year 1895 will show a decrease in the number of failures in Canada."

The year has been remarkable, we are reminded, for the low price of staple commodities. That this has had its effect in lessened volume of foreign purchases, measured by money value, is apparent from a comparison of the imports of dry goods at Toronto during 1894 and 1893. The value of cotton, wool and silk goods entered at this port last year was \$750,000 less than 1893. Upon referring to our fyles we find the total Toronto imports of dry goods, including hats, bonnets and fancy goods, were \$5,514,370 in 1893 and \$4,389,812 in 1894, a decline of \$1,124,558.

Reference is made to the action of the section, in concert with the similar section of the Montreal Board of Trade, in making representations at Ottawa with respect to features objected to in the tariff, as well as to inequalities in its administration at different ports. The subject of municipal taxation, as it pressed unduly upon the members of the section, is now, we are told, being dealt with by the Attorney-General of Ontario. In a concluding paragraph the report recommends the consideration during the current year of the Insolvency Bill, the rights of landlord and tenant as regards fixtures, dating goods ahead, cash discounts and better protection against fire. These are all live issues, and we may reasonably expect some improvement in the existing state of things regarding them to result from their discussion by the dry goods section of the Board of Trade.

#### MINERALS IN ONTARIO.

The third report of the Ontario Bureau of Mines, that for 1893, reached us last week. It was sent on 24th April last to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, and by him transmitted, apparently on the same date, to the Lieutenant-Governor. Where it has been since Providence and the printer only know. The report says of transactions in mining lands leased or sold, that while there was a noticeable increase in number, their average area was less. Most of the patents were taken out in the Rainy River region.

In the statistical portion of the book structural materials are first dealt with. Less stone was quarried and less ordinary brick made than in 1892, but pressed brick of a fancy sort shows increased production. There was, at the same time, a larger output of lime. The manufacture of cements increases steadily; four concerns in the province produce Portland and five natural rock cement. It is said of the former material that some of the home-made is superior to the imported. Terra cotta is a material the demand for which is likely to grow.

Ontario phosphate, or apatite, mines were almost entirely idle during 1893. This was because of the cheaper production of Florida and South Carolina mines. Of gypsum a reduced quantity was mined, only four out of the six companies on the Grand River working. In addition to being a fertilizer, it is now said that gypsum is serviceable as a potato-bug poison. Salt making exhibited an increased output by fifteen concerns at a greater expense, but at a reduced aggregate market value. The production of mica was 70 tons.

Coming to metals we learn that all the copper and nickel mining done in the province was in the Sudbury District, with the exception of the opening up of copper veins