

and manufacturing of New Brunswick, and the farming capabilities of P. E. Island, are such as surpass in the most important items, and equal, or nearly equal, in others, those of the neighboring States of the Republic, and if some of the enterprise and capital of those States were embarked in the Provinces many more Americans would flock here for employment, than Provincialists now do to New England.

Our remarks bear chiefly on the relative conditions of New England and the Maritime Provinces, but Ontario and the North-West compare favorably with the more Western States, which, like the Eastern ones, are by no means so relatively well off, all things considered, as is supposed by those who persuade themselves that "Eldorado" always lies beyond their native land, and in doing so too often "fondly imagine a vain thing." At all events let our young men use every caution in fully acquainting themselves with particulars before they decide to expatriate themselves—"it may be for years, and it may be for ever."

LA BELLE FRANCE.

France, pre-eminently the land of atheism and of ruthless vivisection, is also pre-eminent in the consumption of alcohol. The Paris correspondent of the (London) *Globe*, gives a frightful summary of the Report presented in June to the Senate by the committee appointed to enquire into that subject. Notwithstanding an increase of excise duties the consumption has increased from the average fifty years ago of 1.12 litres per head to almost 4 litres in 1885, amounting to 400 *petits verres* for every man, woman and child in France! Suicides of "alcoholists" have increased six-fold since ten years ago; while 28 per cent. of the lunatics in the public asylums are inebriates. No doubt a large proportion of this alcoholism is in the fatal shape of absinthe; at all events, since the ravages of the phylloxera have decreased the supply of the comparatively wholesome brandy made from wine, an immense increase has taken place in the distillation of semi-poisonous spirits from beet-root, Indian corn, and other materials. Of course, some consumption is due to the torturing of animals by trying the effect of different alcohols on them, causing stupor and death. This proportion, however, is probably small. The inordinate national use of deleterious spirit is plainly affecting the French people at large in a marked physical deterioration of the population. In several departments, the number of exemptions from military service (a very accurate test) on account of infirmities, which in 1873, were 6 per cent, has quadrupled in the last few years. In the last fifty years, crimes of all kinds have increased from an average of 41,140 to one of 146,024, and in the very last year to the number of 163,728. The condition of things in France would, indeed, seem to be deplorable. In the event of war, an absinthe-soaked soldiery would, as time goes on, be less than ever able to hold its own against the stalwart, if beer-drinking, masses of Germany; and it would seem certain that our own "thin red line," in which abstinence is gaining ground, would certainly not find it more difficult than formerly to hold its own against an onslaught always liable to be disheartened by repulse.

The deadly "alcools industriels" are, no doubt, grand results of French chemical science; but M. Paul Bert, M. Claude Bernard, M. Vulpian, and their colleagues, who have made France the head quarters of science, and it may be added, of irreligion, will, after all, scarcely prove to have done much for her prosperity or for the happiness of her people, not to speak of their virtue or honor.

BAD MANAGEMENT ON THE INTERCOLONIAL.

One of the worst features of Government ownership of Railways is the fact that their management cannot be criticised without arousing political passions, the Opposition seizing upon any disclosures of inefficiency that may be made as an argument against the ruling party, and the Government of the day feeling bound to support their careless or incompetent officials as zealously as though the attack was aimed at them. Party hacks supporting the Government are afraid to publish the truth, as they know the Opposition journals will use it unfairly, and as a result, grievances that would be thoroughly ventilated and quickly redressed in the case of private corporations are hushed up and wizked at where the Government has control. THE CRITIC, as an independent journal, has always given a hearty support to all the good measures introduced by the present Government, but has been equally ready to condemn where condemnation seemed necessary. Where we perceive inefficiency on the part of the Government employees, we are bound to publish the facts; and if the authorities then refuse to investigate, they must be held responsible for the action of their servants. That the Intercolonial has of late years been much mismanaged, is admitted by the staunchest Conservatives, and the Staff Correspondent of THE CRITIC, some time since, furnished undeniable proofs that the road had fallen into incompetent hands. Having called the attention of the Government to this fact, it would have been supposed that the Department of Railways would have taken some action in the matter, but results prove that it has not done so, the road, although it is summer, being run with little regard to time, or to the comfort of the travelling public. From this we are forced to the conclusion that our correspondent was in error in blaming Mr. Pottinger, who has evidently been carrying out the instructions of his superiors at Ottawa, Mr. Pope and Mr. Schrieber. It would seem, from an article in the *Chignecto Post*, that the road is managed in Ottawa, and that Mr. Pottinger, although virtually the Superintendent, has very limited powers, all grievances having to be settled at the head office, much to the annoyance and delay of petitioners. This is not as it should be; and it now appears to us that the Intercolonial will never be properly managed until the resident Superintendent is given absolute authority. How can he

be expected to maintain strict discipline, or be held responsible for the inefficiency of subordinates, where complaints or charges of mis-conduct of the most trivial nature have to be reported to Ottawa, and settled there?

Political influence has there full opportunity to be brought into play, and culprits escape punishment who would be summarily dismissed had the Superintendent the proper authority. Having placed the responsibility where it belongs, we will again advert to some very annoying features in the management or mismanagement of the road. Under the summer timetable the delay at Moncton is obviated, but the so-called Express trains, stopping at every station, are in reality only mail trains, and through passengers lose hours of valuable time on the road. The Quebec Express is generally from one to four hours late, a palpably undue imposition, not only on the travelling public, but on our business men, whose correspondence is thus unwarrantably disarranged. At way stations, passengers never knew when to expect the train, and spend hours in dismal stations anathematizing the road and all its officials. These constant delays must also have a demoralizing effect on the train hands, and probably entail some cost to the country for extra hours labor.

"Anything may be thought good enough for the Maritime Provinces," but we would warn Mr. Pope and Mr. Schrieber that they are treading on dangerous ground, and that if a change of policy is not speedily adopted, the Government of the day will lose the support of many of its most intelligent Maritime Province friends.

Patience has ceased to be a virtue, and a long suffering public now demands that the Intercolonial shall be run to meet its requirements, and not in the interests of a clique at Ottawa.

"BLUE-NOSE GRUMBLING."

The above is the heading of an article contributed by Mr. Addison F. Browne to the *Philadelphia American* of 2nd July. It is a heading which, objecting to the term "Blue-Nose," we admire as little as we sympathize with the sentiment which inspires the article. This *motif* is to be gathered from the following quotation:—"A power with whom we are forced to acknowledge political connection. I say forced, because there can be no doubt that a great majority of Nova Scotians will not remain so-called Canadians a moment longer than they are obliged to." *En passant*, we will only remark that the Dominion elections scarcely bear out the accuracy of so sweeping an assumption. Mr. Browne goes on to deprecate the N. P. on the plain ground, that "among other bad things about it is the fact that it compels us to trade with Canadian merchants;" and that "the high duty which would exclude many descriptions of foreign goods, if we could do without them, is nothing short of cruel hardship." Believing that we ought to encourage our own manufactures, we must confess that the point does not present itself to us as so very bad a thing, and we are quite unable to discern among the people of Nova Scotia the signs of suffering from "cruel hardship." But the slightest inconvenience, real or imaginary, is regarded by annexationists through spectacles of extraordinary magnifying power and all the special pleading and *ad captandum* arguments with which they seek to hoodwink the people of Nova Scotia, are based on the artificially magnified lines.

Mr. Browne dwells on the fact that the water communication with the United States is always open, while the Intercolonial is blockaded with snow for "several weeks" during every winter, which, he says, "is certainly a strong reason why we should prefer commercial intercourse with the Republic." We consider that this statement is chargeable with exaggeration; but Mr. Browne continues—"Another equally weighty argument is found in the quality of the articles which we are invited to purchase. Food preparations and utensils of every description that come from the States are in every respect superior to those offered by the Ontario and Quebec dealers. In the first place, the quality is finer, and the material is put up in more attractive packages." Space will not allow us many instances, or much particularization, but we hold that, in very many cases Canadian manufactures are fully equal to those of our neighbors, and of course, the longer they are upheld and preserved from American slaughtering, the better they will become. We have ourselves procured from Messrs. James Scott & Co. and others, food preparations from Toronto, which could scarcely be surpassed in quality, made up in excellent and quite sightly packages, and it strikes us that the special pleaders must be hard up for a grievance when they lay stress on "attractive packages."

A further statement that "the tools are of more workmanlike finish, and better adapted to our needs," is open to question. It is certain that the Ontario agricultural implements will bear comparison, and nothing but prejudice prevents our having the option of buying cuffs, collars, and many other articles of Montreal manufacture without the privilege of paying high duty on the English or American goods.

Twenty-five years ago, tweeds equal to the Scotch were manufactured in dozens of Ontario factories, which were afterwards destroyed by American competition; and if any one will step into one of the musical depots in Hollis street, he will find that, to take one grade (and a very excellent one) of piano, an instrument of Toronto manufacture can be purchased for \$350, which, if the same quality of American manufacture would cost \$450, an organ, which imported would cost \$200, can be obtained of home make for \$125. The enquirer will also learn that the protection of Canadian instruments is every year ensuring a larger output of home manufacture, while increased sales are both lowering the price to the purchaser, and enabling the manufacturer to turn out continually improving classes of instruments.

Mr. Browne's article is a long one, and cannot be exhausted in one of ours. From our point of view it abounds with fallacies, and we must refer to some of considerable importance in a future issue.