

## GOLD REGION OF NOVA SCOTIA.

Dr. Sterry Hunt's Report on the gold region of Nova Scotia is a production of considerable value, but as the Commissioner of Mines, at Halifax, had gone over the ground pretty fully in his annual reports, the usefulness of the former is somewhat lessened. If we were permitted to make a suggestion to the learned members of the geological survey, we might remind them that there are, in this province of Ontario, mineral deposits whose development would be of great advantage to the country and which might with propriety be made the subject of scientific investigation. A handy blue book on the Lake Superior silver mines or on the Madoc district would be acceptable. Nova Scotia is comparatively independent now of scientific aid, as its mines are in good working order, whereas the Madoc district is suffering from neglect and incompetence.

## GORE DISTRICT MUTUAL INS. CO.

An interesting report of the annual meeting of this Company will be found in another column. It appears that the business is increasing, and although the losses during the year were in excess of those of former years, yet the change in the mode of assessment facilitated the financial operations of the Company to such a degree as to enable all claims to be met with comparative ease.

## Communications.

## HOW TO MAKE THE ST. LAWRENCE THE COMMERCIAL HIGHWAY OF THE WEST.

(No. 2.)

Editor Canadian Monetary Times.

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The political and commercial importance of the St. Lawrence can hardly be overestimated. Hitherto it has been strangely overlooked by the people of British America, but the course of events is forcing us to recognise the urgent necessity for developing this great outlet for the products and industry of the west. It is no theoretical question requiring the prescient sagacity of a philosopher or of a statesman. The commerce of the west, forced to flow through the Erie canal, has outgrown that "respectable ditch," as it has been aptly termed, and must find a new channel for its ever increasing stream. To the western States this is probably a more important subject than to ourselves. The recent meeting of the Board of Trade is significant as to the feeling of profound interest which is now evinced among our neighbors by the great question of throwing open nature's highway for the trade of the west. The Erie canal is not only insufficient to meet the emergency, but is in an unsatisfactory state of repair, while the exertions of the State of New York are regarded by the west as a species of blackmail, which can no longer be tolerated. The political aspect of the question is not less important than its commercial bearings. When there are populations divided only by an imaginary line, united by ties of blood, and by kindred associations, speaking the same language, trained up to similar habits of self-reliance, and familiarized with the blessings of free institutions, commercial sympathies must in time direct and control the political future of the country. The St. Lawrence will have more influence in moulding nationalities than time honored traditions and antiquarian antipathies. Once

let this outlet for trade be thrown open and the west has its highway through British America. The great grain growing States of the Union will have more in common with Canada than with New York, and we may yet see the strange spectacle of the western States and the New Dominion joining hand and hand to construct, in British territory, costly public works which will be of far greater value to our neighbors than to ourselves. Already the Americans express the wish to join us in removing the obstructions that are impeding their trade. The suggestion is well worthy of attention. Once let the Western States feel that they have an interest in the development of our great water communication with the ocean, and that Canada is their door to the markets of the world, and we secure allies that will continue friendly to us long after political storms have changed the present aspects of nationalities in the new world. Political parties may change; hereditary friendships and animosities may die out, but as long as water runs down hill, the trade of the west, as far back as the eastern watershed of the Rocky Mountains, must, for all time to come, obey the controlling hand of nature, which has stamped on the face of the continent the channels through which the trade of the north and west must flow. Let us, however, take a more limited and sutenial view, and regard it in its bearings on Canada West and the Maritime Provinces.

The enormous length of the New Dominion, compared with its breadth, has already suggested to Messrs. Bolton and Webber the idea of comparing confederation to joining together the different parts of a fishing rod. We propose to increase still more the length of the rod by adding a new joint, the Hudson Bay territory. To the eastward we have Maritime Provinces, which are commercially as well as geographically isolated from the west of the Dominion, though governed substantially by the western provinces, the great bulk of whose trade flows into New York and aids in building up the wealth and foreign trade of our neighbors. Our canals, expensive as they have been, have been unavailing to keep the trade of the west in its natural channel, the St. Lawrence, from causes which I shall hereafter discuss. But if our canal, lake and river navigation with all its natural advantages cannot compete with the Erie canal, what is to be thought of our constructing an almost interminable line of railway as an outlet for the trade of the west. Were the Erie canal not in existence, the shorter lines of railway from the lakes to New York would preclude any rational hope of the Intercolonial railway being a successful competitor.

What then can be devised that will make the millions of dollars already sunk in our canals productive, and save us from sinking many more millions in that still more unpromising undertaking, the Intercolonial railway?

This is a serious question for a comparatively poor country. To commence life with two such millstones around its neck, as our unproductive canals, and a costly line of railway that, as matters now stand, can never pay its working expenses, is, to say the least, tempting Providence, and inviting failure and embarrassment. The Maritime provinces, when they go into the West Indian and South American markets, are met by the products of our western territory, which are exported by our neighbors, and the east will be taxed to enlarge the western limits of the Dominion, and thus still farther to swell the trade of New York and to increase the means of competing with us in the markets of the world. The old adage of the instability of the "house divided against itself" is too suggestive to escape our memory, and is too true not to be verified by the future. No thinking person can suppose for a moment that we can build up a Union by developing commercial isolation, if not antagonism, between the west and east. Intercolonial trade is our only safeguard against disunion. Unless we look forward to becoming a part of the United States the trade of the lakes must be made to flow through the St. Lawrence, the great natural highway of the commerce of the Dominion; Pictou, St. John, or Halifax must be the entrepôt of this trade. If this is impossible or undesirable, then confederation is a

geographical blunder. If it is practicable, we have it in our power to strengthen the Union by the enduring bonds of commercial sympathies and common interests. The enlargement of our territory, instead of building up the power of a rival, will swell the trade of the Dominion. Deepening the canals will extend our commerce, and drain off the products not only of our western country, but also of the western States. Building the intercolonial railway will be of greater service to us in peace than it is intended to be in war, and will become a commercial as well as a military necessity. In the winter it will supply the articles which cannot be forwarded to the seaboard during the summer months, and will bind together by a convenient and rapid mode of transit the outlet of our products with the sources of our supply.

R. G. HALIBURTON.  
(To be continued.)

## THE MADOC GOLD REGION.

To the Editor of the Canadian Monetary Times.

SIR,—I have, with much pleasure, read the article in your last number, headed—"The Madoc Gold Region." It is a step in the right direction, and hits where it ought to strike. It is too true, as therein stated, that "bad judgment, inexperience, avarice, and poverty, if not fraud and misrepresentation, have done their worst" for that region, "and the golden treasures of Madoc still lie buried in rock;" and, you might have added, the Government have rendered all the assistance in their power, not by way of encouraging or aiding the truly honest and industrious miner, but by throwing not only cold water, but every obstacle and impediment in the way of his success, and embarrassing and hedging him in on all sides, and at every salient point, with absurd enactments, and unwise rules, and departmental regulations, founded on inflated rumour. That gold exists in mercantile quantity, in the Madoc region, the past, and the still more recent magnificent discoveries of the precious metal in several localities, extending over a large area, have placed it beyond a question of doubt in the mind of those who take the trouble to see for themselves and know the facts. Therefore the miner, bearing in mind that other places and countries, before being successful, went through the same, if not a greater state of prostration, should not be discouraged under present neglect, manifest difficulties, and governmental carelessness, but persevere, and success will, in the end, crown his efforts. In the meantime, every encouragement and assistance the Government can afford, should be extended in support of the struggling mining interests of this Province, particularly as it will, ere long, become a settled and permanent branch of industry, of great importance and benefit to this country. There can be little doubt, that as soon as those hardy and venturesome pioneers succeed in establishing the auriferous wealth of that, or any other region in this Province, there will be no lack of Government interference in the shape of officials, tax gatherers, and royalty hunters; but now is the time when their interference, not however as tax or royalty hunters, would be of service, and, if properly directed, thankfully received.

It is now some six or eight months since the writer drew the attention of the Government, through the public press, to the necessity of causing an examination of the geological structure and mineral characteristics of that section of the country to be made, during the present season, and to cause reports and well prepared plans upon which the different anticlinals and metaliferous and gold-bearing strata, that occur there, should be plainly and distinctly laid down, and published for general information; but up to the present time, it has neither received that attention, at the hands of the Geological Survey of Canada, nor from our Government, which its importance demands. We even find members of our Geological Survey being sent, at the expense of the Government, to the remotest limit of the Dominion (the eastern extremity of Nova Scotia) to examine and report upon the gold fields there, while that of Madoc, being so near, and of so much importance to us, is left in the cold shade to take care of itself. The facilities afforded