

RECIPROCITY IN COAL.

An article in the Morning Chronicle of recent date bears out the contention of the RECORD that among the changed conditions to be met with in any attempt to send Nova Scotia coal into the New England States is the competition of Western Virginia, which until recently was not a competitor in that market. The point sought to be made was this: If Western Virginia is now capturing an increasing share of the New England market, day by day, from powerful interests in Ohio, Maryland and Pa., it is not likely that she will quietly look on if Nova Scotia seriously attempts to secure share of the much sought after market. Says the Chronicle:

"So far as Nova Scotia is concerned the burden of the opposition to a measure of reciprocal trade with the United States has come from the coal operators, who strongly protested against lowering the Canadian tariff on the ground that it would imperil their hold on the St. Lawrence market without gaining for them any compensating advantage in American territory. On that part they are very firm. Curiously enough the opposition to reciprocity in coal is not confined to this side of the line. Some, at least, of the American operators appear to be no less hostile to the proposal than those of Nova Scotia. In this connection Mr. Sereno E. Payne, one of the highest tariff authorities in the United States, has made an interesting statement to the staff correspondent of the Toronto Star. Mr. Payne is chairman of the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives and was the joint author of the Payne-Aldrich Tariff measure which was passed in 1909. Mr. Payne is a protectionist, but he belongs to the moderate rather than the Dingleyite school, and he is, for instance, favorable to a measure of reciprocal free trade in agricultural implements.

Speaking of the possibility of reciprocity in coal, Mr. Payne stated that when the Tariff Bill of 1909 was under discussion before the Ways and Means Committee, it was proposed to put coal on the same footing as agricultural implements; that is to say, to offer free importation to any country which would give the same terms to United States coal. Some of the members of the committee, though at first agreeable to this idea, afterwards changed their minds, and the present tariff was adapted, that is, 45 cents per long ton on bituminous and 15 cents per ton on slack.

It was suggested to Mr. Payne by the correspondent that original proposal with regard to coal might be revived, and his reply was:

"I think it altogether unlikely? It is a curious fact that the two sources of the greatest objection to the reciprocal coal idea, Nova Scotia and West Virginia, are the two districts which compete for the same market, that is to say, New England. Conditions for marketing are about equalized as well. The coal from West Virginia is worth about 90 cents a ton more for steam purposes, but the N. S. shippers have an advantage over ours, as they can practically load their vessels from the mine."

Nor do we admit the superiority of West Virginia coal over our own, but Mr. Payne's statement is of special interest because it discloses the fact that the proposal to offer free coal for free coal at the time of the framing of the Payne Tariff Bill was rejected because of the opposition of the American coal operators who feared Nova Scotia competition. If, however, the West Virginia operators have had the opportunity of reading the case presented by the operators in Nova Scotia

against reciprocity, the former will see how groundless were their fears. If, on the other hand, they persist in the opinion that Nova Scotia would be a dangerous competitor in the New England market, they doubtless will be influential enough to prevent any reciprocal offer being made to Canada, and the coal operators of Nova Scotia who are afflicted with similar fears may breathe easily. They will have strong support from their prospective competitors across the line."

With regard to the quality of Pocohontas (W. Va.) coal as compared with Nova Scotian, any admission or refusal to admit, of our esteemed contemporary does not alter the fact. The RECORD has time and again declared that Nova Scotia coal is as good as the general run of American coal, and we have stated, based on observation, that, Nova Scotia coal looks as good as Pocohontas, but we have not been quite rash enough to declare that Nova Scotia coal for steam purposes is the equal of West Virginia coal. We could not do that in face of the fact that some of the great steamship lines prefer Pocohontas to all others, and besides being a good steamer it is a coal comparatively free from black smoke. It is not urged that Pocohontas coal is good for gas or is in favor for domestic use. Our coal is perhaps better as a steam producer, and the Ohio and Pa. coals, those of them carried by rail and marketed in good condition, are perhaps more in favor where appearance counts. It is but natural that Virginia, bent on securing a share of the New England market, should object to Nova Scotia entering the lists as a competitor. Western Virginia may not know what Nova Scotia might do, though we ourselves have a fair idea that we could not do much against so youthful, vigorous, and growing a giant.

IRON ORE.

The RECORD has refrained for a long time from asking iron ore enthusiasts for proof that there is more iron ore in Nova Scotia than there is coal to smelt it, and therefore we have not had the exchange of pleasantness which enlivened things a bit in the past days. Simple as the question appears, innocent looking as it is, it had somehow the necessary ingredients to make certain owners of areas fly off at a tangent. In his New Year commentary Mr. Plummer stated that the iron ores of Nova Scotia, could not be taken advantage of at the present time, and I think he gave the reason, viz the low per centage of iron. The queer thing is that the iron ore proprietors, did not take him to task. Perhaps he was too big a man for the little dogs to bark at his heels. In the 'Geology of the Economic Minerals of Canada, lately published, there is a short chapter devoted to the iron ores of Nova Scotia. The RECORD was content to ask, where, outside of Nictaux there was abundance of iron ore of economic or commercial value. This was not a captious question, though captious critics fell foul of it. The RECORD got no satisfactory answer from those who became angry at the question. It was left to the Geological Department to do so. The implied opinion of the RECORD is endorsed, and we may say we could have wished it had been otherwise for we are really desirous to see ore development in Nova Scotia. We give below the whole of the chapter in so far as it applies to Nova Scotia:

"Nova Scotia, though the seat of large iron and steel industries, at Sydney, New Glasgow, Londonderry, and elsewhere, does not produce much iron ore, the