

events, for opening up such new countries as the North-Western and North-Eastern Counties about Toronto the narrow gauge would have capacity enough. As a proof of this we may point to the Northern Railway from Toronto to Collingwood over 100 miles in length. This line, which is on the 5 ft. 6 in. principle, does not carry a hundred thousand tons of freight a year, and the capacity of the narrow line would, at all events, be double that. The same may be said of all the railways in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. These lines are 5 ft. 6 in. wide, and Mr. Boyd, Government Engineer, speaking of them says pointedly after quoting the statistics of what work they do,—"A line of 3 ft. 6 in. would so far have accommodated all their traffic, quite as well as the present 5 ft. 6 in. lines."

The natural deduction from these fatal admissions is that it would have been wiser to have commenced with a cheap narrow gauge, than with an expensive broad one. If this plan had been followed millions of dollars would have been saved, the public burdens would have been lighter, and the public would have been as well served. In but too many instances the Provinces commenced house-keeping with too expensive establishments; and the sooner we reduce expenses and get into the way of constructing our public works in a cheap and efficient manner—in a manner suitable to our own wants, necessities and means—the better it will be for us. In the construction of the Intercolonial road, we hope that the mistakes of the past will not be repeated. If they are, it would be better for the Dominion to have a good International macadamized road, instead of a bad railroad.

There is one more point noticeable in connection with the proposed railways from Toronto to Grey and Bruce, and from Toronto to Nipissing, namely. It is intended to build them on the small contract principle. That is—instead of giving one contract to one person or firm, for the construction of the entire road, the line will be divided into small sections, and a separate contract will be given out for each section to a separate individual. By this means the people along the route will construct the lines, and the money will be spent among them. Economy also will be secured by this plan, and no doubt the work will be as well done at all events, as if it had been entrusted to one contractor, who of course would sell out to a second, who would sub-let it to a third, who in his turn would adopt the very plan of small contracts, which it is proposed to adopt in the first instance.

On former occasions we advocated the adoption of this plan in connection with the construction of the Intercolonial Railroad. We have also advocated the introduction of the cheap and narrow gauge principle into the Dominion. Since then the subject has been much discussed in public, and one of the results that have been obtained is a clear knowledge of the melancholy fact, that in the Province of Ontario, and no doubt in the Province of Quebec, and certainly in the Provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, costly railways on the broad 5 ft. 6 in. gauge have been constructed, and have been in use for years, and they have not done per annum the work that could have been done on cheap narrow gauge lines. In other words, the capacity of narrow gauge railways is fully equal to all the freight and passengers that have been carried over the broad gauge. We have thus been burdening trade and commerce, increasing our taxes, hampering our resources, retarding our industries and piling up millions of debt in the construction of works which are evidently too costly to pay. We purchased and are feeding an elephant to do the work of a donkey. Is it not time that we learned wisdom?

NOVA SCOTIA.

THE Province of Nova Scotia is the only one which does not cordially accept the Union, and certainly its representatives, both in the Parliament of the Dominion and in the Local Legislature, are making considerable outcry against it. One of them in Parliament describes the position of Nova Scotia to be like that of a young lady betrothed against her will, kicking, equirring and squealing against the consummation of the engagement. This is undoubtedly the present attitude of the Province, and we cannot divest ourselves of the belief that this state of things has arisen, not so much from any injury the Union is likely to inflict on Nova Scotia but from the manner in which the project has been carried. Had the same course been pursued there as in New Brunswick, we

believe the same result would have followed. Mr. Tilley promptly laid the scheme before the people. At first, both he and the scheme were defeated, the people not having had sufficient time to consider it fully; but at the following election, Mr. Tilley carried the country, and so also at the recent elections. In Nova Scotia, where public opinion was much divided on the question, the Government steadily resisted placing the scheme before the people. This unwise policy not only aroused the indignation of the people but made them believe that some injustice must be about to be inflicted upon them when the Union party was afraid to come forward and discuss the question on its merits. This is the mistake which has been committed in Nova Scotia. It was skillfully made use of by the politicians opposed to the Government, who carried all the recent elections with one exception, and thus brought about the present awkward situation of affairs.

The question arises—what will be the result of this antagonism? We have great faith that if wise counsels prevail, Nova Scotia will become reconciled. That a protest will be carried by Mr. Howe and his friends to the Imperial Government during the ensuing summer, is not a matter of doubt. This protest will probably receive the signatures of all the members both of the Federal and Local Legislatures, with two or three exceptions in each; but what will the Imperial Government reply? It takes no great foresight to understand that. It will doubtless be to this effect:—"Gentlemen,—This measure of Confederation has been carried in a strictly constitutional manner, receiving the approval of the Nova Scotia Legislature, and whilst giving due attention to the petitions of so many of Her Majesty's loyal subjects in Nova Scotia as you represent, we cannot repeal an Act which we conceive so necessary both for Imperial and Colonial interests, until, at least, a fair trial has demonstrated that some injustice or injury has been done to your Province." What then? Why, Mr. Howe and his colleagues will have to afford the Union the trial so reasonably claimed for it, and that being the case, we have very few fears as to what the ultimate result will be.

So far as the British North America Act is concerned, Nova Scotia certainly fares quite as well as, if not better than, the other Provinces. As has been stated in Parliament, a better case could be made out in favour of Ontario being treated unfairly than Nova Scotia. However important the Maritime Provinces may be, and we are not inclined to underrate their importance, they are comparatively poor as compared with Ontario, and certainly in a Union the poorer Provinces are likely to gain more than the rich. In the future before us, we incline to the belief that Nova Scotia will become one of the most prosperous parts of the Dominion. It will be the seaboard frontage of the new nationality we are establishing. This fact, of itself, must add greatly to its importance and prosperity. It must result in a large increase of trade with the West, and we see no good reason why it should decrease its foreign traffic. The statistics of 1876-'77, which have just been published, show how rapidly the trade between Ontario and Quebec and the seaboard Provinces is increasing. By consulting the returns for the last two years, we find that British North America sold to Canada in '65-'66, the value of \$857,922, in '66-'67, \$1,168,373—showing an increase of trade of \$250,341, or over 25 per cent. We sold to them in '65-'66, \$1,071,116 and in '66-'67, \$359,197—increased \$197,881, or considerably over 100 per cent. These figures afford good grounds for hope that our trade will yet swell to large dimensions, and cement the Union by interest and feeling as it is now in name.

If Nova Scotia were now to go out of the Union, we do not believe it would be long until she wanted to be in again. She could hardly expect Halifax to be made the eastern terminus of the Intercolonial Railway if she now cut herself adrift. From all these considerations, we feel assured that Nova Scotia will not secede, but as soon as public opinion becomes reconciled to the change, and the excitement of the late election dies away, Mr. Howe and friends will take more reasonable grounds than they occupy at present. If they do and Nova Scotia comes loyally to accept the Union, we predict for it a great future. When we consider its position as the frontage of Confederacy, when we remember its valuable shipping and fisheries, and when we take into account its iron and coal, so necessary to manufacturing industry, we have little doubt that it will become the New England of Canada, and one of the most influential and prosperous parts of the Dominion.

THE POSTAL BILL.

THE Postal Bill, laid before the Senate last Wednesday, is very voluminous. It repeals all laws at present in force in Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, but provisionally continues the existing post office arrangements and commissions. Existing bonds, contracts, &c. are to continue in force, as well as all departmental regulations, unless abrogated by this Act.

Section 7 and subsequent sections define the duties and powers of the Postmaster-General, provide for the appointment of Post Office Inspectors, a Deputy Postmaster-General, and other officers, and prescribe their salaries shall be fixed by the Postmaster-General, subject to the provisions of any Act relating to the civil service. Power is given to the Postmaster-General to negotiate and arrange for the conveyance of mails between Canada and the West Indies, or between Canada and Newfoundland, provided such engagements shall not have effect for more than a year, unless sanctioned by Parliament at its next session.

Section 14 fixes postage on letters for any district within the Dominion at a uniform rate of 3c per half ounce, to be in all cases pre-paid by stamps affixed to such letters.

Letters posted at any office, wholly unpaid, shall be sent to the Dead Letter Office, but if any letter is only partially paid it may be forwarded to its destination, charged with double the amount of postage omitted to be paid, and such postage shall be recoverable from the sender, if not paid by the party to whom sent.

On local or drop letters the rate shall be one cent per half ounce, and in all cases pre-paid.

Section 31 and following sections provide that the rate of postage upon newspapers published in Canada, issued not less frequently than once a week from a known office of publication, and sent to subscribers in Canada or elsewhere by mail, shall, from and after 1st January, 1889, be one cent for three numbers, or in that proportion for any greater number, to be in all cases pre-paid at the time of posting same, by stamp or otherwise, as the Postmaster-General shall direct.

It is also provided that exchange papers may be sent free; and provided also that until 1st January, 1889, all newspapers shall be liable to a rate of one cent for every two numbers, to be paid either at the Post-Office where such newspapers shall be posted, or at the office where delivered. All other newspapers sent by mail in Canada 1c each.

The rate of postage upon periodicals, publications issued not less frequently than once every three months, shall be one cent per four ounces in all cases pre-paid. Books, pamphlets, circulars, packages, patterns, samples &c., one cent per ounce, provided they contain no letters.

Rates for mail matter between Canada and the United Kingdom and the United States or other foreign country, to be subject to regulations of the Postmaster-General.

Section 32 gives exclusive power to the Postmaster-General to convey letters, &c., within the Dominion, with certain exceptions.

Among other provisions of the Bill, the most important are the following:—

Rates for delivery of letters by carriers in cities. 2c newspapers 1c. It is provided that the Postmaster-General may, at any time, establish a system for free delivery in cities.

The franking privilege is continued as at present. The Postmaster-General is not liable for letters or property lost.

United States mails may be allowed to pass through Canada upon obtaining the like privilege for the transportation of Canada mails through the United States.

No Postmaster in any city or town, and no officer of the Post-office Department shall vote at any election for members of Parliament.

Mail contracts over \$20 to be awarded only, after advertising for tenders, to the lowest bidder.

The mails to be carried on the railways on such terms and conditions as the Governor in Council may make.

The Postmaster-General may, with the consent of the Treasury Board, establish a system of Post-office Savings Banks in connection with a central Savings Bank, established as a branch of the Post-office Department at the seat of Government.

The Postmasters at such places as are authorized, are to receive deposits for remittance to the central office, and repay the same; such deposits to be entered in the deposit book, and an acknowledgment of it to