

with the question of rendering still more efficient than is the case at present the methods employed for improving navigation by means of lights and buoys. Both these papers, though treating primarily the one of the rugged coast-line of Scotland, and the other of the French shore, should be of interest to Canadians in view of the applicability of some of their data to the St. Lawrence river, and of the vast importance to our whole country, signified in a thorough, widespread recognition of the absolute safety of this route; a condition, which, it is needless to say, is far from prevailing yet. The St. Lawrence route is to some extent a "dog with a bad name," so that every little calamity for which it is partially or wholly responsible is liable to be magnified. This does not mean, however, that its safeguards to navigation cannot be improved; they can and should be; the above is only another way of stating that no possible improvement or additional safeguard should be delayed a day longer than necessary.

One most striking point to be noted in both the papers referred to is the increased power of the lights used now-a-days to guide mariners. For instance, Mr. D. Stevenson, the author of one, states that twenty-five years ago, the most powerful signal on the Scotch coast was of 44,500 candle-power. At the present time, lights of over 100,000 candle-power are quite common, and the above-named authority gives one example of an electric light equal to 3,000,000 candle-power. As a general rule, however, the electric light does not appear to be favored by navigators. Baron Quinette de Rochemond, the reader of the paper on the experience of France in the matter of lights, stated that some of the signals used off that coast were visible a distance of forty miles on the darkest night. Some very good results have been obtained in that country by means of incandescent burners consuming compressed gas and petroleum vapor, but modern improvements are noted not only in the increase of intrinsic brightness in the source of luminosity, but in the greater perfection and dependableness of the generating apparatus employed.

One of the greatest impediments to successful navigation, even now, is fog, and regret was expressed at the congress that but little real progress had been made in combating this evil, so powerful an enemy off our eastern coast. It looks, however, as though the most successful remedy after all will be found in wireless telegraphy; or, in other words, some method for conveying electric warning of a dangerous spot to instruments placed in readiness on board approaching vessels. This is what is being tested at the present time by the Dominion Government; it is to be greatly hoped it will prove efficacious.

OUR AUSTRALIAN LETTER.

The experts who said that the Federal tariff would not appear until the end of this month are seemingly well within the mark, and are inclined to postpone the much needed measures coming a month longer. The grumbling at the delay is increasing. The Federal Parliament has sat for sixteen weeks and not a bill has yet become law. It has been pointed out that the first Parliament of Canada in that time had placed 72 Acts in the Statute Book, completed its work, and adjourned. An Australian periodical in explanation says:

"But Canada had as its Premier, Sir John A. Macdonald, one of the greatest parliamentarians of his time."

Already one representative has died, and a second has

resigned his seat, owing to his inability to take the inordinate length of time that Parliament is likely to sit, from his private affairs. Others, and these amongst the ablest of the members, are threatening to withdraw likewise. A bad sign is that though the House sits less than four days in the week both members and Ministers are irregular in attendance. Another unpleasant outlook, is that differences between the states and Federal authorities have already developed. The Premier of New South Wales has promised to set apart a day on which his Parliament can discuss Federal matters, with an eye to criticize alleged extravagance, and in Queensland, where an election is pending, the Federal Government is backing one candidate and the State Government is throwing its influence in favor of another. There is some good coming from these untoward circumstances. It is exciting public attention and creating discussions which may create an active public sentiment much needed, but hitherto painfully lacking in Australia amongst its commercial and conservative forces. This must tend to frustrate dangerous legislation, which is threatened in both State and Federal Parliaments. The Parliaments threaten to rival one another in New Zealandizing Australia in the matter of minimum wages, old age pensions, state railways, banks, insurance, and industries, compulsory settlement of labor troubles and nursing the unemployed. Good as they may be in theory the enquiry that has been made shows that they have not been unmixed blessings in New Zealand. The radical Premier that passed most of the acts has plainly warned the people that some of the acts have been so abused that there is great danger that public sentiment will turn against the whole thing. The success they have so far had has been due mainly to the lavish expenditure of borrowed money. The best workmen too, are beginning to see that though their pay has been increased their cost of living has also been increased, and that they are "likely in the end to come out of the hole that they went in at." It takes experience, and considerable of it sometimes, to teach that you can't lift yourself very high by pulling at your boot straps, and the Australians are learning.

The Government is now directing its attention to a policy that promises to produce better results; helping to find markets for the producer. New Zealand is leading the way. It has recently sent out a commercial agent around the world, and is liberally equipping him. New South Wales is to expend \$25,000 on three men, one for England, one for Africa and one for China. New Zealand long assisted its producers by teaching how to best grow and make. It brought over some young Canadians to teach its dairy men how to make cheese and butter, and it is now chuckling over the fact—that according to the admissions of the Canadian High Commissioner in London they are beating Canadians in the British market. They say, "Canada can take the prizes at the Yankee shows so long as New Zealand takes the prizes in the English markets." What is the matter with Canada that she is lagging behind?

The Canadian census figures as cabled here are a sore set-back to the Canadians out here, who have been talking "bigotry" about Canadian industrial development. It has been emphasized by the number of young Canadians who come out here and say that "things are not too good in Canada." They commonly find that they are much better than here, and in a week heartily wish themselves back again. A good many work their way back to America on the steamers and sailing craft; others go to South Africa in a similar position. A young man who comes here without sufficient means to keep him for some time is likely to have a sorrowful time of it. From enquiries they have been led here mainly by the absurd stories published in United States papers about this country. This may be a workingman's paradise to him who can get a job in the Government employ, but that cannot be had until one has become a voter, and it requires twelve months residence to qualify. Then it is not too regular when it is attained. Of book-keepers, accountants and shop assistants there is no lack and it would take time before a Canadian could push himself into a place with a salary sufficient to pay a modest board bill. On the other side the Canadian Commissioner has enquiries by letter and personal visits from Englishmen and Australians, some of them with capital, with a view of ranching or farming in Canada.