

THE CRITIC.

The future greatness of this Dominion depends upon the development of her varied natural resources, and the intelligence and industry of her people.

HALIFAX, N. S., FRIDAY, JULY 31, 1885.

A NEW INDUSTRY.

Theoretically, Nova Scotians are clever men, practically some of the more so. We have within this province resources, which, if properly developed would greatly increase the wealth of our people. These are allowed to be idle, because our capitalists lack the practical knowledge which is required to ensure the success of a new enterprise. In the early days of gold mining in this province many of our moneyed men were bitten; to-day these mines, under the management of skilled men, are paying well. There is no country in the world better adapted for the manufacture of the sulphite wood-fibre than is this province. We have the requisite minerals in abundance, with an almost inexhaustible supply of the wood required, and these with cheap fuel should enable us to successfully compete with the world in this new and growing industry. Our lumbermen are year by year forced to go further back from the lakes and water courses to obtain suitable timber, thus enhancing the cost of production to no inconsiderable extent; but they are leaving behind them the small and younger growth of timber which is admirably adapted for making wood-fibre, and as the land is capable of producing a new growth within twelve or fifteen years, the supply of raw material should be unlimited. We have it on good authority that the average annual yield from our forests is about 125 million feet, board measure, which, if sold at a profit of \$2.00 per thousand feet, would realize \$250,000 to the manufacturer. If an equal amount of wood were manufactured into wood fibre, it would produce 90,000 tons, which would net after paying all expenses \$20 per ton, total profits being \$1,800,000. The wood fibre when manufactured would probably sell at \$60 per ton, which upon the above quantity would be \$5,400,000. Of this sum, at least \$5,000,000 would be distributed among our lumbermen, miners, quarry men, farmers, millers, ship and real estate owners. The lime stone and pyrites required in the manufacture of wood fibre, are found in large deposits in this province, and as there is no fear of glutting the market, the industry is one which could not fail to prove remunerative. There are in Norway 50 pulp mills which produced in 1884, 100,000 tons of pulp. In Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, there are 600 ground wood pulp mills and 80 chemical fibre works, of which latter 60 are producing sulphite fibre. Despite this enormous production the price of pulp and fibre has not fallen materially, notwithstanding the depression of the last few years. The sulphite wood fibre can be produced at one third of the cost of esparto and straw pulps, which are very largely used, and the rapidity with which sulphite fibre has been adopted for all grades of paper up to the finest, proves that it must fill "a long felt want," and fill it well. England and France consume yearly 315,000 tons of esparto pulp. Wood makes a better pulp, and will in time replace that material. It will thus be seen that we have in this province natural products, which if properly combined and skillfully manufactured would produce a marketable product, and that 90 per cent. of the receipts from its sale would find its way into the pockets of our own people. We have the capital and the material required for this industry, but we lack men possessing sufficient practical knowledge to ensure its success. Why do not some of our young Nova Scotians visit the German or Norwegian mills, which would fit them to engage in this enterprise. One year's experience in a large mill would be sufficient to enable them to acquire a thorough knowledge of the business, and this knowledge might prove advantageous both to themselves and to the country at large.

THE SHORT LINE RAILWAY.

We have before us Messrs. Daly and Stairs' letter, which was read at the meeting of the Chamber of Commerce held in this city on the 2nd inst. In that communication a number of statements are made which we sincerely trust—not only for the sake of the gentlemen concerned, but in the larger interests of the Government, the Dominion and more especially the Maritime Provinces and this port—can be corroborated and fully verified. Mere expressions of opinion, no matter from what source they may originate, are valueless unless supported by facts. We require something more than bare statements to convince us that we have been fairly and honestly dealt with in the selection of the route for the Short Line Railway, and we therefore look to our representatives to give us some good and substantial reasons for their advocacy of "the Pope line," which was condemned by the Chamber of Commerce and the Joint Committee of the City Council and citizens.

In answer to the able reports and the full array of facts and figures which we have had presented to us in favor of "the Combination line," it is not sufficient to tell us that we are ignorant on the subject and do not know what is in our own interests, nor is it an answer to Mr. Light's report to say that he is unreliable. Mr. Light is a gentleman who stands very high in his profession, and we cannot accept an attack upon his character as an answer to our demand for justice. We have, however, other documents to which we may refer for information besides Mr. Light's report, and it has never been hinted that the statements contained in these

documents are unreliable. We have reference to the reports made by the Government surveyors who examined the different routes, and to the reports of Mr. O'Sullivan, Inspector of Surveys for the Province of Quebec, Mr. Keating, City Engineer of Halifax, Mr. Baillairge, City Engineer of Quebec, and others. It seems to us that if the Pope or International route is really the shortest and best, or if it is even a good line, the data upon which such an opinion has been formed should be given to the public, for certainly the very opposite is to be gathered from the reports to which we have referred.

Messrs. Daly and Stairs say in their letter that "the people of Halifax must remember that there are many things which must be taken into account besides *distances* and *grades*," and that "it is impossible to enter into a discussion of the merits of the different lines." We can comprehend why they found it impossible at that time to enter upon the discussion there is however no impossibility now, and we ask them for a plain and straightforward statement of the facts and reasons which induced them to cast their votes in favor of a line which it is generally believed will have the effect of contributing largely towards the destruction of the trade prospects of this port. As to the important considerations which they state it was necessary to take into account "besides *distances* and *grades*," we think the citizens of Halifax should be informed what these things were. They must have been weighty indeed to have swayed the judgment of the men who had pledged themselves to support none but "the *shortest* and *best* line."

We await with no little interest the expected explanation from our members, and will allow them a reasonable time before making any further comments on the subject.

OUR MERCHANT MARINE.

The preponderance of ships flying the British flag now engaged in the world's commerce has aroused the jealousy of foreign powers, but up to the present time their efforts to secure a larger proportion of the carrying trade have been ineffectual, while year by year the tonnage of England has continued to increase, and has in fact during the past 30 years been trebled.

	Vessels.	Tons.
Great Britain.....	22,500	11,200,000
United States.....	6,600	2,700,000
Norway.....	4,200	1,500,000
Germany.....	3,700	1,400,000
France.....	2,900	1,100,000
Italy.....	3,200	1,000,000
Russia.....	2,300	600,000

England's tonnage on the ocean highways is between four and five times that of the United States. It is seven times that of Norway, eight times that of Germany, ten times that of France, eleven times that of Italy, and eighteen times that of Russia.

If the comparison is confined to steamships, which now carry so large and so important a part of the commerce of the world, the supremacy of Great Britain is exhibited in a still more striking way:—

	Steam Vessels.	Tons.
All nations.....	7,764	9,232,000
Great Britain.....	4,649	5,919,000
France.....	458	667,000
United States.....	422	601,000
Germany.....	420	476,000
Spain.....	282	305,000
Italy.....	135	166,000
Holland.....	127	155,000
Russia.....	194	149,000

England's steam tonnage is almost ten times as great as that of her nearest rival—France. It is ten times the United States' steam tonnage, and forty times Russia's. The British flag covers nearly two-thirds of all the ocean steamers afloat.

In 1860, the year before the civil war, exactly two-thirds of the foreign trade of the United States was carried on in American vessels. Last year five-sixths of the American foreign trade was carried on in foreign vessels. According to the proportion of tonnage dues collected at American ports of ships of different nationalities, British vessels carried about one-half of the foreign freights and American vessels one-sixth, while the remaining third was divided between Norway, Germany, Italy, Spain, and France, in the order named, without taking account of the smaller maritime nations.

Nearly three-quarters of England's carrying trade on the ocean is done in English ships.

The report of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty, which has just been published in neat pamphlet form, will be found of interest to those unfamiliar with the grand work being carried on in the city and province by this humane organization. Four hundred and eighty cases of cruelty to men, women, children, and to the lower animals, have been investigated, and the perpetrators have been punished as the law directs. Mr. Naylor, the energetic Secretary Agent of the Society, is a most indefatigable worker in the cause of humanity, and it is mainly due to his untiring zeal that the Society is now enjoying its ninth year of active existence. The S. P. C. appears to be no exception to the rule which affects similar humane and charitable organizations in this and other cities, the work being carried on unostentatiously by a few interested gentlemen who too frequently have to put their hands in their pockets to meet current expenses. This Society has been, and is, doing a noble work in the city, and deserves to be supported handsomely by our citizens.