

THE DOMINION IRON AND STEEL COMPANY.

A few weeks ago in consequence of the sinking of a steamer in the Sault Ste. Marie river, by which navigation was suspended for about a week from all Lake Superior to lower ports, great distress was felt, especially by the Chicago, Cleveland, Buffalo and other iron furnaces because of the interruption of their supplies of ore; and this emphasizes the fact that although American furnaces that depend upon ore mined in the Lake Superior region enjoy remarkable facilities for obtaining them, there is always a possibility of interruption through just such incidents as that here alluded to.

Their ores are exceedingly rich in metallic iron, their mines are easily worked, they are contiguous to good harbors and deep water, their ore-carrying vessels have very large capacity and are speedy in their movements, and the facilities for loading and unloading and otherwise handling ore cannot be excelled, perhaps not equalled anywhere. It should be observed, however, that the locations of these lake port furnaces are such that they are not contiguous to their sources of supply of either ore or fuel and that water transportation is possible to them only about eight months of the year. It should also be observed that under the advantages possessed by these furnaces, and in the face of the disadvantages, the iron industry and the collateral trades incident thereto in the lake regions of the United States, have assumed the most remarkable importance, and have contributed to a great extent in placing that country far in the lead of all iron producing nations.

Whatever may be said of the lake regions and centers of iron production of the United States, considering their facilities for production, may with equal force be spoken regarding the lake regions and centres of Canada, for if we are so inclined we can draw upon these American sources for our supplies both of ore and fuel, the water facilities being common to both countries; but it is only a matter of time when our own iron mines bordering on Lake Superior will be opened up; and the same may be said of mines in the more eastern portions of Ontario. Of course we know that ore from some of these mines is now being used in both Canadian and American furnaces.

Great as are the possibilities of Ontario in the development of an iron industry similar to that of the United States bordering on the Great Lakes, those of Nova Scotia are infinitely greater in that the supplies of both ore and fuel are cheaper, more accessible and not handicapped by a limited season during which water transportation is available; and it really seems that the recently organized Dominion Iron and Steel Company, who are now pushing the construction of their new furnaces and other works in Cape Breton, having control of all the capital they may require, will soon be in a position to manufacture iron and steel at lower cost than any other concern in the world. In addition to the command the Company have of most of the known iron ore deposits in different parts of Nova Scotia, and in New Brunswick also, most of which are of superior quality, they also own or control some very remarkable deposits in Newfoundland that are contiguous to deep water harbors that are accessible the year round. Nothing has contributed so much to the cheapening of iron in the West as the increased size of the vessels that navigate the upper

lakes. It is well known that the larger the cargo a ship can take the cheaper freight rates will be. But there is a limit to the size of ships that can go through the Sault canal and they would have to be greatly enlarged and the lake harbors would have to be deepened at enormous expense, before boats drawing twenty-four feet of water, such as can reach the piers at low tide, in a great many harbors in our maritime provinces and in Newfoundland could be accommodated. Indeed these provinces abound in magnificent harbors capable of accommodating not only the largest ships now on the ocean but much bigger ships than any yet built.

Ore from the Lake Superior mines can only be shipped by water for about eight months of the year, lake navigation being closed during the winter. There are thirteen harbors in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia open throughout the year, viz., St. John and St. Andrews in New Brunswick, and Halifax, Lunenburg, Yarmouth, Annapolis, Barrington, Liverpool, Digby, Lunenburg, Parrsboro and Shelburne in Nova Scotia, besides a host of good harbors which are open nine months of the year. The iron ores in every section of the Maritime Provinces are within easy reach of seaports and could be transported to Sydney or Lunenburg at all seasons of the year.—The Canadian Manufacturer.

BIG CONTRACTS.

One of the largest contracts ever placed in Pittsburgh is that given to the Riter-Conley Manufacturing Company, of that city, for the building of a steel plant for the Dominion Iron and Steel Company, at Sydney, Cape Breton, Canada. Some time ago the Riter-Conley Manufacturing Company took the contract for four blast furnaces for this concern, each to have a daily capacity of about 400 tons. The Riter-Conley people took the contract for all the work on these furnaces above the ground, the price being close to \$2,500,000. This has been followed by the placing with the same concern of a contract for the building of a steel plant for the Dominion Iron and Steel Company, the contract price being close to \$2,500,000; or \$5,000,000 for both contracts. The contract just placed calls for everything necessary in the way of mills and furnaces for the immense plant, and to make it complete and ready for operation. It includes ten 50 open hearth furnaces and a large blooming mill, the latter to be built by Mackintosh, Hemphill & Co., machinery builders in Pittsburgh. In addition, all the necessary machinery needed to operate the plant will be furnished by the Pittsburgh concern. It will be eighteen months before this large work is ready for operation, but the work will be pushed as fast as possible.

The comparative statement of pauperism which has been issued by the Local Government Board supplies figures for England and Wales over a period of forty-three years. In 1857, taking the month of July, there were in every one thousand inhabitants 42.2 paupers. For July of the present year there were only 21.2. It is no spasmodic improvement; down the whole long range of years this levelling up of the masses and reduction of pauperism has been ever-failing and regular.