

DIGBY'S FISH INDUSTRIES.

Digby, N.S., is a bright little town, whose one boast—although she may boast of landscape—is her fishing industries. The *Courier* gives a sketch of the fish-curing and packing firms of the town in a recent issue. Mr. Boutillier, of Boutillier & Morehouse, Centreville, said, the other day, that the catches and prices (of fish) of late have been hardly as good as last year. His firm, however, shipped 5,000 cases cured haddies [haddock] this past season, from October 1st to the end of January. They are also this year making a specialty of boneless fish, shipping 1,000 cases. This is a part of the trade they have not tried before, but having equipped their new factory with the required machinery, intend to increase their output by such manufacture. Boutillier & Morehouse are the leading cannery of haddies. In 1893 they put up 1,500 cases, last year 1,100, and purpose 1,200 this year. The cans are packed four dozen in a case and shipped principally to the upper provinces. The firm have canned these goods for six years and have brought the art to a high efficiency, their goods being known in all the markets as first-class.

The canning of haddies was tried ten years ago by Mr. G. A. Viets as an experiment. The first attempt failed, but later efforts perfected the method, and it is now a valuable and profitable part of the industry. Boutillier & Morehouse employ 25 men in their factory, and their fleet consists of 25 large boats and 10 smaller. They intend building another factory this summer, which, with their present well-equipped premises, will give them an excellent stand.

D. & O. Sproul, said, in speaking of the present low prices:

"We look entirely to the upper provinces for markets for our haddies and always sell before we ship. But in different parts of the province there are parties who are starting in the business at all times, lasting often only a season or two, then closing up for want of experience or resources. While in being, these sell on commission and thus they greatly affect the market for the selling shipper. We and other shipping firms have nowadays to contend with this influence."

"What were your shipments last year?"

"We shipped 5,000 cases of [cured] haddies and 3,000 drums of dry hake and haddock, and 2,000 quintals of cod. The hake and haddock went to Cuba."

This firm will have about 60 men employed in the lobster fishery which has now commenced. They will have about 4,000 traps set along the shore. They shipped 2,200 cases live lobsters to Boston last year, and will probably have more this season as their preparations are very complete for a good fishing season.

The past season with the firm of Syda & Cousins has been a very good one. The catches, on the whole, of haddock were about the same as the year before, and they had their factory capacities taxed to keep up with the fish brought in. They shipped between five and six thousand cases of haddies. In partnership with D. & O. Sproul in the Digby Canning Co., they canned 350 cases of lobsters, or 16,800 cans, representing about 100,000 small lobsters. These went chiefly to Boston.

"How is the 'Digby chicken' trade? Fallen off, hasn't it?"

"Yes, very much in late years. Ten years ago it was a very important part of the fisheries, but of late the herring seem to have left us altogether and gone out further in the bay." The reason Mr. Syda thought was in part the steamboat traffic on the basin. The steamers' ashes work havoc in the herring shoals. A little is still done, he said, however, along the southern shores of the basin in the chicken catch.

LAKE SHORE RAILROAD.

The twenty-fifth annual report of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway Company for the year ending Dec. 31, 1894, has just been issued. Perhaps the most remarkable feature in the report—remarkable because of the fact it is without parallel—is that although since 1871, for a period of twenty-three years, notwithstanding the capital stock of the company has remained the same, its mileage has increased nearly fifty per cent., while its construction and equipment account stands as reported in 1883, nothing having been added. By dint of good management and rigid economy

the road was enabled to put a small balance (less than one thousand dollars) to the credit of income account after payment of interest and six per cent. dividend, a creditable showing, circumstances being considered. The report contains many statistical tables detailing the operation for the twenty-five years, all of which are interesting, as showing the course of railway traffic during that time. Within that period the ton-miles have increased four hundred per cent., but the earnings have increased only fifty per cent. The receipts per ton-mile have fallen from one and one-half cents to less than six mills, but it has been possible to reduce the cost per ton-mile only from .932 to .406. It is particularly interesting to note that the profit per ton-mile in 1870 (.572) is exactly the same as the gross receipts per ton-mile in 1894.

The same general result also applies to passenger traffic. In 1870 the road carried 2,065,440 passengers for \$4,192,960, while in 1894 it carried 4,542,924 passengers for \$4,420,642. Another feature brought out by the report is, that notwithstanding the steady decrease in haulage capacity of both locomotives and cars, the freight train earnings per mile have steadily decreased from two dollars and three cents in 1870 to one dollar and fifty-six cents in 1894, the passenger business showing a like result. Perhaps the most surprising fact revealed by the report is, that the average rate per ton-mile on west-bound business is but little more than that on east-bound business. When it is remembered, however, that the coal and coke business of the road constitutes its largest tonnage, this is readily accounted for, although the publication of the figures will serve to correct a very general misunderstanding in this regard. Altogether the report is a very valuable one and reflects great credit upon the management of the road.

A FRENCH SUBSTITUTE FOR FIRE BRICK.

The following is from a French correspondent of the *London Colliery Guardian*: On account of the difficulty of obtaining fire bricks of uniform quality, except from Great Britain, M. Bebois-Reuleaux has devoted considerable attention to finding a substitute at lower cost. After many experiments he has succeeded in obtaining an infusible product containing from 95 per cent. to 98 per cent. of pure silica, which, mixed with another product, is said to insure perfect homogeneity, and at the same time absolute infusibility. The raw materials which are found abundantly in several of the French departments, are so cheap that the bricks may be produced at half the cost of English for an equal quality. Some of these bricks tried in a blast furnace, at the hottest place, are reported by the manager to have stood thoroughly; and in the bridge of a puddling furnace, where only English bricks can withstand the heat, the new bricks were found quite satisfactory, as also in the bridge of a heating furnace worked for 13 hours continuously. At some steelworks, moreover, a half brick of the new manufacture was exposed during a whole day in a Siemens-Martin furnace, and was taken out without having undergone any change, and with the corners still sharp.

MINING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

While the mineral resources of South Africa, Western Australia and India are receiving constant attention, it is surprising that the mining development of British Columbia should be left entirely to the Americans. The letter from our Victoria correspondent which we publish in another column calls special attention to the outlook for investors in mines in that part of the world. Our correspondent, we have reason to know, is neither directly nor indirectly interested in mines, and we should have a very strong objection to booming one particular set of mines above all others. What he has written is, we believe, the result of strong convictions and careful study of the conditions existing in his province. It seems scarcely possible to convince outsiders, and particularly the average British investor, of the extent and richness of the minerals of British Columbia in gold and silver. In the district of Kootenay their occurrence in great bodies widely distributed is remarkable. The Silver King properties were syndicated in England, and stocked at \$1,500,000. The report of the expert upon which the mine was negotiated is avail-

able, and from this it appears that the ore in sight will pay for the mine and leave a surplus of several times its cost. This is the only property in which British capital is largely interested, and it is only one of the great properties that are being developed. The rest are in the hands of Americans, who practically control the mining industry in the southern part of the province, and everything imported, men and machinery, is American.

The Slocan Star, for a sixteenth share in which \$100,000 was refused, has a tunnel of several hundred yards working in solid ore. This is perhaps the most remarkable property being developed, but the richness of the ore is not less noteworthy, averaging \$100 a ton at the smelter. Picked ores run much higher. There is certainly every reason to believe that this will be the next great mining country. So much is thought of the prospect that three different lines of railway have been built into the mining districts of Kootenay, which depend solely upon the ore to come out for their earnings, and several more have been projected. Our correspondent remarks: "I would like to see the mines in the trade more largely in the hands of our own people, and I am strongly of the opinion that if a commercial and development syndicate were organized in London, and sent out several competent representatives to inspect the country thoroughly, and report upon it as a field for investment, and, secondly, as an opening for trade in British goods, it would open the eyes of your people to their opportunities. The ownership and operation of mines, smelters and tramways in British hands would command the trade in supplies."

—*British Trade Journal*.

HIGH PRAISE FOR AMERICAN MACHINERY.

Mr. Hiram Maxim, the well-known inventor and engineer, whose experience in England and other countries has made him in every way a competent critic, writes as follows concerning American machinery:

"When the German Government decided to make rifles on the American interchangeable plan, they purchased from the Pratt & Whitney Company, Hartford, Conn., about \$1,500,000 worth of American tools. These were brought to Germany, and a manufacturer in Berlin, seeing the great advantage of the American tools, established a factory and commenced to build them on a large scale. To-day this manufacturer has not only practically driven English tools from the market on the continent, but he is also sending tools to England and selling them at prices considerably below English tools. When I had to equip some very large factories, I found it much to the advantage of my company to purchase the greater part of the tools from American makers."

"German tool makers have profited very largely by the introduction of American tools. Only a very few such tools, as, for instance, milling machines, etc., are imitated in England, but the Germans imitate every mortal thing of any value made in the States, and their work is only slightly inferior to that of Americans. I have purchased and compared genuine American tools with German imitations, and have found that the castings of the former are sounder and stronger, and that the deviation from truth, though very small in the German tools, is three or four times as great as in well-made American machines."—*Iron Trade Review*.

WHAT HAS BECOME OF THE LAW OF AVERAGE.

The editor of *Insurance* broke his leg (he will excuse us for mentioning this matter again, but it is necessary to the present purpose); Ashley, of the *Advocate*, had his foot burned by a falling lamp; the editor and publisher of the *Insurance Post* has been seriously ill in Boston; "Col." Geldert, of the *Insurance Herald*, was painfully bruised in a runaway accident; Patriarch Hine is laid up by an injury to his foot caused by a swinging door; Nat Freeman, of the *Record*, had an attack of pneumonia and narrowly escaped dying; Livingston, of the *Blue and Gold*, nearly choked to death while telling an unusually big "whopper"—all of these calamities have recently overtaken members of the insurance press. What has become of the law of average, that so many misfortunes should have suddenly fallen upon insurance newspaperdom?—*The Chronicle*.