

MINERALS.

The mineral industry of the colony has taken on a new importance during the same period. It was not until 1886 that the possibilities of an immense hematite iron deposit at Bell Island, in Conception Bay, were realized, and two years later the Nova Scotia Steel Company and the Dominion Steel Company were actively operating these beds, which have become one of the chief labor-giving industries, employing some two thousand men and producing a million tons of ore every year, which, it is estimated, yields a profit of a dollar a ton. Situated as Bell Island is in one of the most accessible of the Bays, and with nearly half of the chief centres of population, the mines have become a stand-by for thousands of the fishermen, who after the close of the cod-atching in the autumn, and again in the spring before the seal-fishery begins, find employment in these workings at good wages, and hundreds labor there all through the winter, in addition to which there is a permanent force engaged the whole year round. So profitable is this industry for the proprietors, that the Government has just induced them to voluntarily contribute a royalty of 7½ cents a ton on their annual output for the next ten years, which will yield the colony \$75,000 per annum.

NEW RAILWAYS.

The construction of a railroad across the island—545 miles of main line, with 90 of branches, now to be supplemented by 250 more—opened up the vast untraversed interior to settlement and exploitation; called into being enterprises of considerable magnitude, and disclosed latent resources previously unimagined; created new forms of trade and industry; and facilitated communication and intercourse; besides enabling the capitalist and the workman to make the wilderness fruitful through the agency of the mine, the farm and the mill. At the same time the construction of some 2,000 miles of telegraph line was linking together the remotest "outposts" (fishing hamlets), and two splendid services of coastal steamships were purveying all the comforts and conveniences of modern marine travel to the dwellers along the 6,000 miles of seaboard.