

ATLANTIC STEAMSHIP SERVICE.

We have received a pamphlet with the above heading, being the third article in *Queen's Quarterly* on that subject, by Sir Sanford Fleming. He is very strong upon the risks of the northern route to the St. Lawrence by Belle Isle, and cites accidents, detentions, icebergs, etc., etc., as rendering that route undesirable. Referring to the approval by Parliament of the contract of Peterson, Tate & Co., Sir Sanford points out that there is nothing in the contract to prevent the adoption of conditions which he thinks are of great importance. Among these is the establishment of a port of call during the open season on the Eastern Atlantic coast of Nova Scotia, Sydney, in his judgment, being preferable. He strongly advocates the adoption of the route to the South of Newfoundland, through Cabot Strait, as superior to the northern one, through the Straits of Belle Isle. "While the establishment of a 'port of call' convenient to Cabot Straits," he says, "would confer great advantages to the community, and especially to the Maritime Provinces and Newfoundland, it would at the same time materially advance the interests of the steamship company. The arrangement would certainly secure to the new line the passenger and mail traffic of Newfoundland, which it would otherwise lose; moreover, without it, a considerable proportion of the passengers of the Maritime Provinces would continue to find it more convenient to take the trans-Atlantic steamship at Boston or New York than at Montreal or Quebec."

We may here note a letter which Mr. Dobell received yesterday from Mr. Petersen, dated Newcastle-on-Tyne, June 23, from which it appears that the requisite capital for the fast line, amounting to £2,000,000 sterling, has been all subscribed. Sir Blundell Maple, it appears, has subscribed £500,000 towards the enterprise, and this is one-fourth of the whole. Mr. Petersen is very confident of success, indeed he expresses his determination to make the Fast Line project "a ringing success." Canadians generally will wish him well.

MANITOBA CROP PROSPECTS.

In addition to the general conclusions reached from a *resume* of the report from 350 correspondents on Manitoba's crops, made to the Department of Agriculture and Immigration last month, we have now the Bulletin No. 52 itself. The area under all crops, according to this, is 1,958,025 acres, which is an increase over any previous year, and comfortably near two millions of acres. Sixty-five per cent. of the whole is in wheat, and the increased sowing of wheat this year is general; about twenty-three per cent. in oats, and seven or eight per cent. in barley, and the prospect for cereals is good. The area in different grains is shown below by districts of the Province:

District.	Wheat. acres.	Oats. acres.	Barley. acres.
North Western	90,000	68,940	13,770
South Western.....	554,626	169,925	32,856
North Central	240,181	73,656	37,740
South Central	320,000	105,100	44,000
Eastern	86,075	50,520	24,900
Province.....	1,290,882	468,141	153,266

The present area in flax is low compared with some former years, being in 1897 and 1896 only 20,500 acres, where in 1895 and 1894 it was 82,668 and 80,500 acres respectively. The probable reasons for this we have mentioned elsewhere. Rye is sown upon only 2,975 acres; peas on 1,669 acres, corn (we presume maize) on 713 acres. The area in potatoes and roots has not increased, strange to say, according to the comparison furnished. Indeed roots show an actual decline of estimated acreage, from 7,880 in 1894, and 6,715 in 1896, to 6,130 this year. There was no less than 16,716 acres in potatoes in 1895, which has declined to 12,260 last year, and 13,356 acres this year. Most of the reports say that seeding began April 15th, was general by the 20th or 22nd, and the season was a favorable one.

During the second week in June rains were frequent in most parts of the province, and at present date (June 16th) continued rains, with warm weather, have given new life to all crops. Crop prospects are now greatly improved. There is estimated to be 821,370 bushels of wheat still in the hands of Manitoba farmers, of which quantity almost half is held by those of the South-west district. Correspondents were asked to state the number of cattle fed for beef during the winter, and the number of milch cows in their townships, and from their replies the following estimate is prepared:—

District.	Beef Cattle.	Milch Cows.
North-west district	1,425	11,440
South-west "	2,375	12,450
North Central "	1,449	13,480
South Central "	1,850	11,460
Eastern "	1,630	16,375
Total.....	8,729	65,205

There are now 28 creameries and 31 cheese factories in the province.

WINNIPEG BOARD OF TRADE.

A general meeting of the Winnipeg Board of Trade was held on Tuesday, 29th June, and the account of it sent was not received in time for last week's issue. Mr. D. W. Bole, the president, was in the chair, and there were between twenty and thirty members present. The chairman gave a *resume* of the proceedings of the council of the board at its various meetings, such, for instance, as the proposal to limit the legal rate of interest to 6 per cent., the legal rate of interest on judgment debts; the inspection of electric and gas light meters, the St. Andrew's Rapids, Crow's Nest Railway rates; discrimination in rates to Winnipeg, against freight coming to Fort William by independent steamers; the Rat Portage mining convention.

It was stated by Mr. Ashdown that Mr. Stephenson, of the Crown Lands Department, is preparing a report on the St. Andrew's Rapids, and indeed on the resources of Lake Winnipeg. The Department of the Interior, he said, desired the work to go on, but were sceptical as to the revenue to be derived from the water power. The Government engineer, Mr. Coste, had given assurance that the damming of the river would not raise the water in Winnipeg in the case of a flood.

Mr. Ashdown also told of his interview with Mr. Shaughnessy, of the Canadian Pacific Railway, as to freight rate discrimination against Winnipeg, and of his having written that gentleman thereupon. Matters were now in negotiation between them, and it was not prudent to say more at this stage.

Mr. Bole described his visit to the Rat Portage mining convention; he regarded the convention a great success, a representative body of gentlemen from South Africa, California, Colorado, British Columbia and elsewhere having attended on that occasion; the opinions expressed foreshadowed bright prospects in mining on the north shore of Lake Superior.

Standing committees of the Board were elected as under:

Board of Grain Examiners.—S. A. McGaw, J. A. Mitchell, S. Nairn, S. Spink, D. G. McBean.

Board of Flour and Meal Examiners.—S. Nairn, R. Muir, S. Spink, F. W. Thompson, C. H. Steele, G. V. Hastings.

Board of Hide and Leather Examiners.—E. F. Hutchings, P. Gallagher, H. Leadley, A. Carruthers, F. W. Reimer.

General Grain Committee.—All the members of the board engaged in the grain and milling trade.

The resolution respecting the Winnipeg and Duluth Railway, moved by Mr. T. D. Robinson, seconded by Mr. Jas. Porter, was withdrawn at the suggestion of several members, to be brought up at next meeting.

HAMILTON BOARD OF TRADE.

A heat of ninety-five in the shade was sufficient to account for the small attendance at the annual meeting of the Hamilton Board of Trade on Monday afternoon last. Less than twenty members were present. The faithful few were: W. E. Robinson, president; W. F. Findlay, vice-president; C. R. Smith, secretary; John Knox, William Hendrie, St. Clair Balfour, H. N. Kittson, W. H. Glassco, Jas. Turnbull, Seneca Jones, Rev. Dr. Burns, F. H. Lamb, John Bell, Senator Sanford, John Proctor, and C. S. Murray.

The president read the report of the council, which dealt first with the floating debt of the board, and announced that rent and other expenses had been reduced. Respecting the suggestion in last year's report to form a retail section of the board, it was stated that after the heartiest efforts of the members to bring that arrangement about, and after several meetings with retail traders, the result so far has been the organizing of a separate institution of retailers, independent of the Board of Trade. The board is on record against the exclusive lease granted by the Ontario Government to the Niagara Falls Power Co., and in favor of the building of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway by the Government. It petitioned the Government in favor of an export duty of \$2 per cord on pulp-wood. In connection with the visit of the British Association to Toronto, the council had appointed the officers a committee to extend courtesies to any of the members visiting Hamilton. The conclusion of the report is as under: "The outlook at the present time, comparatively speaking, cannot but be regarded as improved, although a good deal of caution is still very necessary in all kinds of manufacturing. Crops of every kind in the province are good, and the season has been all that could be desired for maturing and ripening, especially for fruit, but the hay and wheat crop is ahead of any year in the past. As far as present prospects can determine, forty millions of bushels of fall wheat will be produced in Ontario alone, with certainly a fair chance of improved prices, which bids well for our country."

Mr. Findlay, chairman of the treasury committee, presented the financial report.

Election of officers, being reached, the chairman was pleased to