

the experiment would not only result successfully, but whatever shipments were made to Europe would lighten the Canadian supply, and possibly cause an upward movement in our home market. Of crude oil, it is calculated that there are at present stored in the oil district—principally in vaults below ground—nearly 300,000 barrels. Most of this quantity was pumped last year, and as present rates would not pay the expense incurred in pumping, the owners are holding it over for better prices. The present rates are preposterously low, but it is impossible to help it so far as Canada is concerned, for the market is completely glutted, and not a few in the oil business have been forced to sell at whatever they could get for it. With such stagnation existing in the oil trade, it seems to us the taxation imposed on petroleum at Ottawa last Session, was most unwise and ill-timed. It has crushed out the last traces of life which existed in the business, and only failed to create a storm of indignation among oil men, because many of them thought they couldn't, any way, be much worse than they were! It is to be hoped the Government will abolish this absurd tax, and that the burdens of the oil-men will be made as light as possible, so that they may be able to export their petroleum to Europe, and compete successfully in the great markets of the world.

## OUR NORTH-WEST COUNTRY'

### ARTICLE II.

THE next point of interest in our North-Western country is the Sault Ste. Marie. On the American side (about half a mile across) there is considerable of a village, the chief feature of which is a small fort surmounted by the Stars and Stripes, and manned by a company or two of soldiers. The Canadian side contrasts favourably with the American, both as regards buildings, location, or quality of the land. This is the head quarters of the Algoma District, Judge Prince, Sheriff Carney, County-Attorney Hamilton and other officials having residences therein. Mr. Simpson, M.P., also resides at the "Sault," and he has recently erected a very large and handsome stone residence on his farm, which is well cleared and in excellent cultivation. The new goal presents a very creditable appearance. All the products of the farm grow well in this quarter, and there is a considerable quantity of excellent land fit for settlement.

When the Red River country is opened up to Canadian trade, the Sault Ste. Marie must rapidly increase in importance. At present the only way to reach Lake Superior is through the admirable canal and locks constructed on the American side. If our trade with the North-West ever becomes important, our Government will hardly allow it to remain at the mercy of the Americans, who might close their canal to our vessels at any moment. The only remedy would be to construct a canal around the rapids on our own side of the river, this canal would be shorter, and could be made cheaper, than that of our neighbour. It is said a company made the American passage (three quarters of a mile long) for a grant of 750,000 acres of wild lands. If our Government could make a similar bargain, it would be money well spent.

Lake Superior is, indeed, a magnificent sheet of fresh water, and it is hardly possible to survey the formation of its northern shore without feeling assured that it is exceedingly rich in mineral wealth. This has, of course, been satisfactorily ascertained at several points, but it is very doubtful if the most favoured Mineral deposits have yet been discovered. The first point reached where mining has been carried on, is Bauchewaning Bay. The Algoma does not now stop at the mines at this place, which, we regret to learn, have been discontinued for some time past. It is to be hoped that it will not be long until they are resumed, with the certainty of success.

The places touched at before reaching Thunder Bay—the chief mining region—are Michipicoton, Michipicoton Island and St. Ignace. The former is the chief station of the Hudson's Bay Company, in what is called the Superior district, and is in charge of a Mr. Bell. It is situated about half a mile up the Michipicoton River, the clean white bandings of the station presenting a pretty contrast with the gaily-coloured vegetation which surmounts the adjoining hills. As at all the Hudson Bay Company's stations, plenty of Indians, wigwags, and canoes, are to be seen in summer. About October, the Indians and their families all set out for the winter's hunt. Back from Michipicoton about 15 miles, an enterprising

American, named Johnson, has a copper mine which promises to turn out well. He has been there for five years, employs a number of workmen, and speaks in hopeful terms of his mining prospects. Living thus out in the fields, surrounded almost wholly by Indians, and pursuing his calling with energy and enterprise, Mr. Johnson deserves to be successful. We believe there is in this quarter great mineral wealth, awaiting only capital and labour to develop it, half of the Michipicoton and St. Ignace Islands are touched by the steamer to get wood. There are only a few straggling whites on each. Both possess very beautiful scenery, and in the neighbourhood of St. Ignace pure agates and amethysts can be picked up on the shores by the industrious searcher.

Thunder Bay promises to be the chief mineral district on the north shore of Lake Superior. It is a beautiful land-locked sheet of water, having a rocky peninsula jutting nearly 100 feet perpendicularly towards the heavens at its mouth, and surrounded by bold bluffs on one side and gentle undulations on the other. The grandeur of Thunder Bay peak as a specimen of wild scenery, would seem to be equalled by its mineral wealth, for an important discovery of silver has very recently been made near it. The Montreal Mining Company own a large quantity of land there, and M. Macfarlane, (Montreal,) whilst prospecting a few weeks ago, discovered the vein in question. From the reports going at Thunder Bay, this would appear to be the most valuable silver mine yet discovered. We had the pleasure of inspecting a chunk of the quartz in the possession of Mr. McDonald, manager of the Thunder Bay Mining Company's Works, and he said it was the richest piece of silver quartz he had ever handled during seventeen years experience. If the assays prove these expectations to be well founded, of which there can be little doubt—the Montreal Mining Company cannot too rapidly commence the development of their territory.

The Thunder Bay Mining Company are vigorously prosecuting the work at their silver mines. They have constructed a small wharf, have from 25 to 30 miners at work constantly, have erected some dwellings and stables, and have carpenters and others busy preparing to erect crushing mills. They have a road made to the Mines, a distance of about three miles, and are making every preparation to carry on their business extensively and successfully. At the mines, a large quantity of quartz has been got out, and now only awaits the crushing and other processes. The richness of the quartz is evident, the precious metal being easily distinguished by the naked eye. We should say the prospects of the Thunder Bay Company are good, but mining is however, a risky business. There are a good many blanks to each prize. We trust, however, that the enterprise of this Company will meet the reward which it merits.

Further down the Bay, a short distance, the Shunnuah Mines are located. They are generally known as the Withers Mine. Last year, they were worked with much energy, and bright hopes were indulged as to the dividends they would ultimately yield to their fortunate owners, this season nothing is doing, the reason given being, the obnoxious mining law passed by the Ontario Government. From letters which have passed between Mr. Withers and the Hon. Stephen Richards, Commissioner of Crown Lands, it is evident the former, like all other miners, is justly indignant at the Royalty tax, and many have decided to stop operations until the law is placed on a better footing. This is the understanding, at all events, at Thunder Bay, and if the Local Government of Ontario can be induced to repeal its stupid measure, the Shunnuah Mines will probably again become a scene of busy industry.

## THE SPANISH WEST INDIES.

WE have been informed by Mr. Smith, Deputy Minister of Marine, and one of the Trade Commissioners from the British North-American Colonies to the West Indies, that a Royal Decree has recently been issued by the Queen of Spain, by which the Differential Port and Navigation Dues exacted upon foreign shipping in Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippine Islands are equalized with the dues levied on Spanish vessels, provided that such foreign vessels belong to nations in whose colonies a similar equality of dues is granted to Spanish shipping.

This concession is of great importance to the shipping trading between the Maritime Provinces and Cuba and Puerto Rico, as the tonnage dues in both

those Islands have been felt by shipowners in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia to be excessively high, more particularly in Cuba, as will be seen by the following scale of Tonnage Dues.

The concession was strongly urged on the notice of the Intendents of Cuba, the Count Toledo, during the conference which the West India Commissioners had with him at Havana.

The concession alluded to will be at once available to the shipping of the Dominion, as Spanish vessels are, 'aced on their arrival in any of our ports on precisely the same footing, as regards tonnage dues, as our own vessels. We believe that still further concessions would be granted by Spain with reference to the trade of Cuba and Puerto Rico, if efforts were made with the authorities at Madrid to procure negotiation on these subjects, as the representations which have been recently made by the authorities and leading planters and merchants of Cuba and Puerto Rico to the Government of Spain, for increased relaxation of their Commercial and Fiscal Laws and Regulations, have met with a very favourable reception.

The following is the present scale of tonnage dues on shipping entering any of the Ports of Cuba.—

	Foreign Vess'ls	Spanish Vess'ls
1. All vessels entering with cargo and clearing with cargo shall pay per ton measurement . . . . .	\$2 35	\$1 35
2. All vessels entering with cargo and leaving with ballast . . . . .	2 30	1 30
3. All vessels arriving in ballast and clearing loaded . . . . .	2 00	1 00
4. All vessels with coals to the extent of or exceeding the number of their registered tons, even when loaded with other cargo . . . . .	0 50	0 00
All vessels with coal only, but less than their register tonnage, shall pay on the quantity of coals they carry . . . . .	0 50	0 00
And for every ton unoccupied . . . . .	1 50	0 50
All vessels with less coals than their register tonnage, and moreover other goods, whatever the extent thereof, shall pay on the number of tons coals . . . . .	1 35	0 75
And on the rest of the cargo . . . . .	2 35	1 35
5. All vessels entering in ballast and clearing loaded with a full cargo of molasses . . . . .	0 50	0 37
6. All vessels arriving in ballast and only loading produce of the country, per ton of cargo . . . . .	2 00	1 00
And for every ton unoccupied . . . . .	0 05	0 05
7. All vessels coming and clearing in ballast . . . . .	0 05	0 05
8. All vessels arriving in transit or distress . . . . .	0 05	0 05
9. All steamers engaged in the regular trade with this Island, of whatever flag or place of departure shall be exempt from all dues, provided they neither bring nor take away more than 6 tons of cargo, and when carrying a mail they are to have all preference in clearance.		
10. All steamers under the foregoing circumstances, but bringing or taking away cargo exceeding the prescribed 6 tons, shall pay per foreign flag \$1 50 and 62½c. per national flag . . . . .		
11. The Spanish mail steamers shall pay tonnage in accordance with their special contracts with the Government.		
12. All steamers not coming within schedule 9, 10 and 11, shall pay tonnage according to flag and place of departure, deducting the number of tons occupied by the engine and coal bunkers from the total tonnage . . . . .		

The following is the present scale of tonnage dues on shipping entering any of the ports of Puerto Rico.—

	Foreign Vess'ls	Spanish Vess'ls
Tonnage Duty per ton register . . . . .	\$1 00	\$0 37½
Light House Dues—vessels of 150 tons and under, per ton register . . . . .	0 03	0 03
Over 150 tons, for each ton in excess . . . . .	0 01	0 01
Anchorage \$2, changing anchorage, \$2, if required . . . . .	4 00	4 00
Fort-Less, \$1 50 at Mayaguez, at St. Juan \$2 and Ponce Interpreter \$8 . . . . .		
Visit of Health Officer \$4 50 . . . . .	14 00	14 00
Harbour Master's fees, \$6, Pilotage at Mayaguez, \$10 00, at St. Juan, \$10 00, at Ponce, \$10 00, in and out both included; Visit Boat, \$3 25 . . . . .	19 25	19 25
Custom House clearance, including stamped paper, &c., \$8 00 at St. Juan, at Mayaguez . . . . .	9 75	9 75
Clearing of Port Fee at St. Juan only, 12½c per ton register . . . . .	0 12½	0 12½