

SHIPPING.

I. SHIPPING OWNED IN THE PROVINCE.

It is of exceeding difficulty to state as facts any circumstances connected with the shipping interests of this continent. The subject has never been made one of careful study by any statistic having the sagacity to discover the short comings of the ordinary official returns and the opportunity of having them remedied.

Scarcely had the *Year Book* for 1867 seen the light, when the writer received a communication from Mr. Derby, a United States Commissioner, having special charge of Marine and Fisheries. Mr. Derby found fault with the statement that the tonnage of the United States was given at 1,579,694 tons only, new admeasurement—the figures being given at page 93 in the *Year Book*, copied from page 291 of Secretary McCullough's "Finance Report," 1865," where we find the following:—

Statement exhibiting the amount of Tonnage of the United States.

1865—Old Admeasurement.....	3,516,787 tons.
“ New “.....	1,579,694 “

Co-incident with Mr. Derby's letter, came a report of Mr. Commissioner Wells, stating that under the old system, the outside measurement of ships was taken, and that in the case of upper Cabin steamers, the depth was taken from the top of the upper cabin roof! This was sufficient to decide the Editor of the *Year Book* not to make any alteration in his figures until a uniform system should be adopted, and that system one which should admit of a fair comparison with tonnage measured under the British rules. He feels very confident that the array of figures which United States authorities have compiled, and which shew that their tonnage has in some years exceeded 5,500,000 tons (while the tonnage of Great Britain last year was only 5,627,500) are utterly deceptive and unreliable. It may, however, be mentioned that Mr. Delmar, the Chief of the American Statistical Bureau, informed Mr. Derby that on investigation he found the tonnage owned in the United States to be 3,368,479 tons, new measurement, on 31st June, 1866.

Nor can a much more satisfactory statement be made, respecting the shipping of the Dominion.

In Canada, we have indeed a series of tables shewing the tonnage registered and struck off the Custom House lists each year, but there is no datum line from which to commence a reckoning—no statement of the number registered at any given time. And if there were, registration and existence are here two very different things—a vessel may ply without being registered, and may be totally lost without being struck off.

In New Brunswick, the registration of shipping has been much better looked to, but as New Brunswick is a ship-selling Province, the number of ships registered there varies according to the state of the market in England; in a good year, the ships are struck off in consequence of sales. In a hard year they stay on, and unnaturally swell the total.

In Nova Scotia, very few of the ships wrecked, broken up, or sold abroad, were struck off the official lists until this year. The latest returns appear to show that the process has commenced, but the expurgation of them is not complete.

Added to all this, comes the consideration that the measurement of ships is not all on a uniform plan in the Provinces, or even in all parts of the same Province.

The tonnage of the lakes, given in the last *Year Book*, was taken from a register of vessels prepared by Capt. Thomas, for the use of Lake Underwriters. Capt. Thomas has not issued any register for 1867, but the Association of Canadian Lake Underwriters have had a register compiled,* with a copy of which the writer has been favored.

The totals of this work for 1867, compare as follows with Capt. Thomas's for 1866:—

	Capt. Thomas, 1866.			The Association, 1867.		
	No.	Tons.	Value.	No.	Tons.	Value.
Steamers	121	33,383	\$1,786,700	136	36,816	\$2,282,000
Propellers	80	16,044	906,700	77	13,810	751,100
Barkentines.....	50	18,091	542,300	43	15,681	468,400
Brigantines.....	19	4,903	89,700	11	3,476	80,600
Sloops.....	5	285	4,100
Schooners.....	310	44,563	1,040,200	270	43,254	1,130,150
Totals.....	585	117,269	\$4,369,700	537	113,037	\$4,712,250

The difference is not great, and the figures of the Association, which has had the advantage of comparing its returns with Capt. Thomas' book, are probably very near the truth. But though the numbers and values of these vessels, being all those which trade on the lakes and River St Lawrence, engaged in what may be called internal navigation, few of which ever go to sea, may be available for comparison with those of sea-going shipping, the tonnage is American. If we say it is equal to 80,000 tons new British measurement, it is a mere guess.

Coming now to sea-going vessels, we find that there were registered in Montreal, at the end of 1866, under the Merchant Shipping Act of 1864, as owned in Canada:—65 steamers of 15,764 tons, and 142 sailing vessels, of 24,044 tons. Registered in Quebec, of 50 tons, and over, 472 vessels, 83,122 tons of less than 50 tons; 287, of 9,758 tons. Below the Port of Quebec (which extends to Bic) 170 vessels are owned in Canada—all sailing craft, with 12,300 tons.

In New Brunswick, the returns give as the vessels registered on December 31st 1866:—At St. John, 612, of 195,199 tons; at Miramichi, 141, of 16,328 tons; at St. Andrew's, 230, of 22,418 tons—Total, 983, of 233,945 tons.* Of these 23, of 2,886 registered or 4,673 gross tonnage, are steam vessels.

* President: Hon. J. H. Cameron. Directors: G. P. Ridout, Esq., Hon. Wm. Cayley, B. Haldan, R. N. Gooch, Wm. Murray, J. Sydney Crocker, Esqs., Hon. John McMurrich, Messrs. Scott & De Grais. Secretary: Capt. R. D. Stupart, R. N. Marine Inspectors: Capts. A. Taylor, Jas. Dick, R. Courneen, J. T. Douglas, and —Crooks.