

These figures show a difference of 531 miles, but besides this all-important advantage, our route possesses several others which, it is believed, would secure it the preference. These are as follows:—1st, the western country through which the Canadian Pacific railway would pass, is rich and fertile—for a long distance the American road runs through a desert;—2nd, the passes in the Rocky Mountains in our territory are over 1100 feet* lower than those our neighbours have to climb over;—3rd, above the 49th parallel the snow-fall near these mountains is comparatively trifling, seldom more than ten inches—the Americans have had to erect some twenty miles of sheds to prevent their trains being buried in avalanches of snow; and last but not least, we have abundance of cheap coal both in the Red River country and British Columbia,—whilst our neighbours have no suitable coal for steam purposes within hundreds of miles of the Pacific slope, and the line of steamers now running between San Francisco and the East, cannot start upon their voyage until they have sent 780 miles to Nanaimo, in British Columbia, for the coal necessary to keep their engines working. In case of close competition, these circumstances must inevitably give superiority to the Canadian Pacific route.

The Dominion of Canada possesses one element of national strength and prosperity which has attracted marked attention among foreign nations, but the importance of which is probably not fully realized by many among ourselves. We refer to our Maritime power. During the great debate in Parliament on Confederation, something was said about British America becoming “the fourth Maritime power in the world;” but how few have fully realized the importance of the fact that, with the exception of Great Britain, the United States and France, this country possesses a larger tonnage of inland and sea-going vessels than any other power in the world? The following statistics of the principal merchant navies are taken from the *Statesman's Year Book*, for 1870, and prove the justness of our claim to rank fourth in the list:—

Countries.	Number of Craft.	Number of Tons.
Great Britain	22,250	5,516,434
United States	28,118	4,318,309
France	15,637	1,042,811
Dominion of Canada †	7,591	899,096
Italy	17,788	815,521
Norway	6,215	795,876
Prussia	1,460	406,612
Spain	4,840	367,790
Netherlands	2,117	267,596
Austria	7,830	324,415
Russia	2,132	180,992
Denmark	3,132	175,554

The number of fishermen and other seamen in the various Provinces, according to the census of 1861, was 69,256. There cannot, therefore, be less than 75,000 persons, besides their families, dependent for their living on the deep, and who, in times of trial, would be found a strong arm of defence. In ship-building we have heretofore taken a prominent place. In a single year our ship-yards have turned out 638 vessels of all sizes, weighing in the aggregate 230,312 tons, and of which we sold to the value of \$9,000,000 in gold. From various causes this industry has not been so prosperous of late years, but having abundance of timber and cheap means of production, we do not despair to see it revive.

Not the least of the attractions of the Dominion are the moderate cost of living and low rate of taxation. Whatever may be the material, intellectual or social advantages of a country, if the people are oppressed with financial or other burdens, these advantages might as well not exist so far as the masses are concerned, for they can only be enjoyed by the opulent few. But we know not where to find a country in which the necessaries of life are cheaper, or the fiscal burdens press more lightly upon the community.

* The Yellow Head pass is 1140 feet lower than the summit level of the U.S. Pacific Railroad.

† All the statistics we give of our ships, seamen, and ship-building, include the returns of Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island. It is apparent that all the nations mentioned do not make up their navy returns the same way. This accounts for the large number of vessels in some cases. The tonnage is the true test, but in some cases it is calculated differently.

‡ This year was 1863. The number of ships was contributed as follows: Canada, 158; Nova Scotia, 207; New Brunswick, 137; Prince Edward Island, 100; and Newfoundland, 26. New Brunswick contributed the largest amount of tonnage by 18,000 tons.