

tonnage of 43,179 tons register, being 147 vessels less than in 1884, and a decrease in tonnage of 29,232 tons register.

462. A number of reasons have been given for this falling off in the ship-building trade, among the most reasonable of which appear to be the fact that iron is rapidly taking the place of wood in the construction of ships, and that as steamers are absorbing almost the whole of the carrying trade of the Atlantic, there is no longer that demand for wooden vessels of fair size that used to exist. Moreover, the general depression of trade throughout the world, has caused such a large number of vessels to be lying idle, that the present supply is more than adequate to the demand. The majority of vessels now built are for fishing purposes, which explains the fact of the number of vessels not having decreased in more equal proportion to the decrease in tonnage.

463. The following table gives the number of vessels and their aggregate tonnage, and number of men employed, that arrived from sea in each year from 1868, at the ports of Halifax, St. John, Charlottetown, Quebec, Montreal, and Victoria, B. C. :—

Year ended 30th June.	Number of Vessels.	Number of Tons.	Number of Men.
1868.....	3,245	1,537,937	52,467
1869.....	3,928	1,599,676	56,468
1870.....	4,295	1,766,853	60,998
1871.....	4,031	1,615,962	56,993
1872.....	4,678	2,011,286	70,208
1873.....	4,601	1,991,231	69,863
1874.....	4,323	2,101,318	70,504
1875.....	4,203	1,919,576	68,837
1876.....	4,055	2,152,225	68,610
1877.....	4,350	2,442,044	68,066
1878.....	4,134	2,406,584	72,282
1879.....	3,899	2,177,604	69,532
1880.....	4,251	2,506,218	76,700
1881.....	4,539	2,735,476	81,752
1882.....	4,377	2,567,123	81,284
1883.....	4,538	2,695,126	83,765
1884.....	5,057	2,873,274	102,091