

have 1,214 locomotives and 21,916 cars. There are 4,463 post-offices in Japan and the length of her postal routes exceeds 60,000 miles. The telegraph system had grown in thirty years until it now boasts 1,450 offices, 16,204 miles of poles and 63,000 miles of wire. In the year 1891 there were but eighteen telephone offices open to the public; to-day there are 72, and the number of messages sent over them goes into tens of millions. Besides the figures quoted, we must note that there are in the Island of Formosa, which now forms part of His Imperial Majesty's possessions, 52 telegraph offices with some 1,500 miles of wire.

The volume of total foreign trade outwards and inwards remained without any sensational rise for say a dozen years prior to 1882, and it was usually up to that date characterized by an excess of imports. But a change came in 1882, and by a more active policy this condition was reversed, and for a dozen years, with one exception, the exports exceeded the imports. It was in the year 1888 that the aggregate foreign trade first reached a hundred million yen (\$50,000,000). But it has developed by leaps and bounds, going from 230,000,000 yen in 1894 to 491,000,000 (say \$245,500,000) last year. Again, however, the balance of trade has changed, and in these last five years the imports enormously exceed the exports. Not only this, but in a majority of years of the last twenty the imports of specie exceeded its export.

AN INTERESTING FEMALE DEBTOR.

Miss Jean McLeese kept a hotel and general store at Soda Creek, on the Fraser river, British Columbia, and appears besides to have done something in the way of ranching and dabbling in mining shares. Her affairs came to a crisis the other day, when her estate passed into the hands of Mr. John A. Fraser, assignee, and at the meeting of creditors on October 10th, at Quesnel, that gentleman was in the chair. Seventeen creditors, for sums amounting in the aggregate to \$9,160, were present. By the first glance at the totals, the estate does not appear badly, for the assets are \$32,520, and the liabilities, \$17,040. But on looking more closely, the assets are found to be largely of the vanishing kind, since out of \$19,148 in book debts, some \$1,600 of which is secured, there is \$7,071 estimated bad, and \$4,764 estimated doubtful, while mining shares and village lots are of questionable value. The stock of merchandise figures for \$9,503; live stock and ranching lot, \$1,209; lots in Soda Creek, Mud Lake, Westminster, \$4,840; mining shares, \$300; warehouses and stables, \$500; notes, mortgage, etc., etc.

Turning now to Miss McLeese's obligations, we find them lengthy and widely spread. There are fifty-one creditors, the list of whom covers places on the Atlantic and on the Pacific, as well as half-way between. So good was this good woman's credit that she could, and did, buy boots and shoes in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, 3,000 miles away; cigars and tobacco in Kingston and Quebec, as well as in Winnipeg and Vancouver; native wine in Brantford and St. Catharines, Ontario; corn juice in Vancouver and Victoria; beer in New Westminster; bottles in Vancouver, besides groceries and dry goods at the big cities of British Columbia, and various merchandise at such near-by emporiums as those of Ashcroft and Quesnel. It is perhaps a tribute to the everywhere-ness of commercial travellers that we find twenty Vancouver and Victoria houses on her list, where there are only sixteen or eighteen around home, that is in Soda Creek, Ashcroft, Barkerville and Kamloops. The names of four or five Chinamen are to be found among creditors, mostly preferred, probably for wages.

There seems to have been much sympathy felt for Miss McLeese's difficulties, for after resolutions had been passed at the meeting instructing the assignee to continue the busi-

ness on a cash basis as nearly as possible, he was ordered to allow Miss McLeese money up to \$60 per month out of the estate for her personal use. And both the Ashcroft Journal and the Kamloops Sentinel contain such notices as the following: "All creditors hope to see the estate pay out and leave, as we hope it will, a good balance for Miss McLeese." One can fancy that the fair debtor possesses striking characteristics. It is hardly an ordinary woman who would be conducting a hotel, a store, a ranch, in the Valley of the Fraser River, 150 miles from a railway. But one does find curious personalities in mining regions. So found the Doctor in Bret Harte's story of "Miggles." Mr. Fraser gives it as his opinion that the estate will discharge all its liabilities, but will take some time to realize. Another meeting of creditors is arranged to be held at Quesnel on 18th January, 1902. The creditor who sends us the paper in this case, appears to expect that a moral will be appended to this condensed account of the estate. It seems hardly necessary to apply a moral which is obvious in the case of Manitoba, Ontario or Nova Scotia creditors. They take great risks in crediting traders on the verge of the Cariboo country, hundreds of miles from the large British Columbia cities. The proper persons to carry such accounts would seem to be the wholesale houses of Victoria and Vancouver. And even they should get a swinging profit on their goods when sold liable to such risk and delay as appears in this somewhat unusual case.

A VISIT TO THE SAULT STE. MARIE INDUSTRIES.

THIRD PAPER.

Impossible is the task of describing in brief space what we saw on this trip to Sault Sainte Marie and Michipicoten. Better, then, make the third paper a series of reflections on the meaning and use of it all. No one who sees what we did and hears explanations of the gradual and natural evolution of these industries, the one from the other, is likely to have any patience with the people—there are such people—who say: "All very fine, no doubt. Mr. Clergue is a clever and adventurous man, an optimist, who bores with a large auger, and spends capital like water. But he isn't making any money." Let us suppose that he is an impractical idealist. But the eastern capitalists he has behind him, putting up their fifteen millions of dollars or more, are among the very shrewdest and most hard-headed people in the States. They, or some of them, visit these works once a year, some of them probably oftener. Is it conceivable that such men as these would continue, year after year, to invest the money of themselves and others if they were not either getting returns now, or satisfied that the returns would come? Besides, whose business is it but their own whether the Clergue syndicate make money or no? It ill becomes any Canadian to find fault with people who put their own money into our waste places and cause them to blossom.

The Testimony of the Rocks is proving what riches we have in Northern Ontario. It is hardly wonderful that many people of no imagination, seeing that rugged coast line of Superior, should say: "Behold! here is naught." Scrubby woods—weatherbeaten, unlovely rocks; these, to the un instructed eye, are "all there is to it." But the prospector, the miner, the scientist, discover in such elements minerals of both use and beauty; the common spruce, in millions of cords, the ideal wood for paper pulp; the small-growth birch for spool-wood and for charcoal-making. These things being demonstrated, along comes the capitalist in his turn, and puts up his money to transform them into merchantable commodities, yielding him so much per cent. All this cannot go on without benefiting the country. These people buy food, machinery and clothing from us and employ our citizens. If the usufruct of the capital so used goes in part out of Canada, it is a pity; but Canada and Canadians meanwhile benefit enormously by the expenditure of this capital.

Sir Casimir Gzowski used to say to engineers, contractors and other employers: "Do not despise advice from your workmen," and would illustrate it by a valuable hint that Robert Stephenson got from a capstan-man when something went wrong at the erection of the Menai bridge. It became evident to us from some things we saw and heard, that the Messrs. Clergue were in such relations with their men as to