Marquette or for Cleveland. On the return journey westward merchandise or coal is the customary freight.

But perhaps the most noteworthy feature connected with lake navigation has yet to be told. Experiments in iron ship-building had been made, ten years ago, principally at Cleveland, but the industry seemed to languish. To-day, however, iron and steel steamers of 2,000, 3,000, and even 4,000 tons, iron tugs, barges and whalebacks are built not only at various ports on Lake Erie, but at Wyandotte, Detroit, and as far west as Duluth on Lake Superior. And, although none of the statistics of this article include Canadian-built ships, or steamers, it may be not amiss to mention that great steam ferries and propellers of 3,000 tons burden are now built by the Polson Iron Works at Owen Sound, Ontario.

This development of metal shipbuilding at inland ports, together with what we have indicated as to the greater size of modern lake craft, largely accounts for the surprising figures of the last four years. There have been launched at United States lake ports since the beginning of 1887 more than two hundred steam or sail vessels, representing no less than 373,000 tons of shipping; the record of last year is 108,000 tons—the largest ever known. That the rate of output is too fast to be maintained is very likely. At all events we find the Cleveland *Marine Review* using the following language:

"In the spring of 1886 began an era of profitable freights, and with it the displacement of the small wooden boats by big steel carriers. As a result ship-building has been carried on to such an extent as to cause some fears of overproduction. The new tonnage to be floated next spring, however, will fall but short of previous years, and this is saying a great deal when the figures are considered." The report of William W. Bates, Commissioner of Navigation, gives the returns of lake shipbuilding for three years past. Those for 1886 and 1887 are compiled by the *Review*:—

Year.	No. of Boats.	Net Tonnage.
1886.....	85	20,400.54
1887.....	152	56,488.32
1888.....	222	101,102.87
1889.....	225	107,080.30
1890.....	218	108,525.00
Total.....	902	393,597.03

The shipping built on the entire seaboard of the United States last year amounted to 169,089 tons, and that upon the Mississippi River and its tributaries to 16,505 tons. It thus appears that the new shipping of the Lakes in 1890 was more than a third of the whole. For the four years since 1886 it was about forty-one per cent. (40.85) of the total.

A LESSON TO FIRE BRIGADES.

Residents of Toronto who were forced to look on helplessly when, a few years ago, a fine brick church in College Avenue was burned to the ground because the water in the reservoir was so low that its pressure would not throw a stream to the tops of the windows, will sympathize with the inhabitants of St. Mary's, Ont. In that town, on Sunday last, Knox Presbyterian Church took fire in the basement from the furnace. "Through negligence of those in charge [we quote from a telegram] both steam and hand engines were out of order, and refused to work; thus the magnificent edifice was totally destroyed before the eyes of hundreds without the first particle of water being thrown upon it." The loss is estimated at about fifteen thousand dollars. Scarcely a year passes that we do not hear of disastrous loss by fire, oftenest in country towns where the fire appliances are under the charge of volunteers, because of somebody's neglect to see that engines or hose are in workable condition. Of all negligent folly, or misplaced economy, the most annoying is that which allows fire appliances, once complete and effective, often costly, to become useless for lack of attention or a trifling expenditure to keep them in working order. When a fire breaks out, and the machinery for subduing it is hurriedly looked up, hose is found to be cracked or burst—the machinery of the engine rusted—a wheel broken—a valve out of order—the cisterns empty—and the sole safeguard of a village or a town is useless in the presence of the flames! May the experience of St. Mary's be a lesson to every town in Canada to examine its fire appliances *once a month*, to examine the cisterns, take the engine out and set it working, inspect the hose and play through it, strengthen the chain of fire defence at its weakest link. "In time of peace prepare for war" is a motto that may well be translated, in dealing with that public enemy the fire fiend, "In time of apparent safety from fire, prepare for disaster."

—The amount of British capital placed in new companies or new loans is tabulated regularly by the London *Economist*. That journal in its issue of 7th March gives the new issues thus far in 1891, and compares them with previous years. The total subscribed for full years was as under:

1890	subscription	£142,565,000
1889	"	189,436,000
1888	"	160,149,000
1887	"	98,066,000
1886	"	101,074,000

Thus far in the present year the new issues have been, exclusive of vendors' shares, &c., £27,201,000. In the same period of 1890 they were £34,054,000; in 1889, £49,024,000; in 1888, £27,590,000, and in 1887, £25,057,000. The largest item in the then current week's subscriptions are, the Milwaukee and Detroit Breweries Co., £1,212,000 sterling, of which 10 per cent. has been paid, and the Produce Brokers' Co., £10 shares, 10 per cent. paid.

A REVERIE AND A FORECAST.

A correspondent of the London *Grocer* sends to that paper some interesting conclusions as to coming changes in the grocery trade. He writes: Sitting by the fire in my old accustomed place, smoking the pipe of peace after the day's business is over, I am trying to imagine what our trade will be twenty-five years hence. There is not the least doubt but we shall have no tea-mixing on the premises; the principal part of the tea sold then will all come in done-up in packets, and the packet teas in most demand will be those that are got up most attractively. What loose teas we require will be blended ready for us.

Among other things that are fast undergoing a change in their appearance are sugars. These, no doubt, will be done up ready for us, packed in ones, twos, and so on, or in two-hundredweight cases; all we shall have to do will be to unpack and place in the lockers. So when we order our sugars of the wholesale houses, what we shall say will be this, "Send on five cases of sugar to sample, packed in two-pound parcels," instead of as now, "five bags of sugar." Soap we may have now wrapped up and out for us. Fruits will also be done up, say, in one pound, or two pounds in boxes, packed in one-hundredweight cases, possibly. We have lard now done up in pounds, and one-pound rolls of butter. Coffees, too, are changing. We also have golden syrup in two-pound tins got up well, and making capital selling packages, and possibly we shall hear of one-pound tins. In fact, packing goods by our assistants in our shops will be unknown then. Every old grocer knows there is not now the work to do in our shops such as there was when they served at the counter.

The qualifications of an assistant twenty-five years hence will be, first, a good schooling, especially at figures; politeness, quickness, and a readiness to keep "his eye on the door;" for customers now will not wait a minute, because, if detained, they are off to the next shop; for there are so many shops now, compared with the number formerly in existence. Instead of the shops being closed almost at any time, there will be a law compelling shopkeepers to close at a given hour, say 7 o'clock; now it is 10 o'clock with a good many. The assistants will get more leisure, and in return for shorter hours they will do all they can to sell as much as possible, and to study their master's interest. I am afraid there will not be much chance of higher wages, unless goods are sold at better profits than at present.

NEW WOOLLENS.

Dress goods stuffs appear in a great variety of designs. If there is a preference for one kind more than another it is perhaps for plaids and knickerbocker patterns. Checks, stripes, polka dots, bars, blocks and snow flake, each in their particular effect, make an agreeable and sometimes striking combination. The tones in the plaids, checks and stripes are most often green and pale blue. Sometimes the green is of a deep hue, and again pale, and so with blue, the fabrics showing to best advantage when draped. Again we see, also, broad stripes of these colors, which may almost be termed invisible. Any one can imagine the very pretty effect of them when draped in dress folds. Galashiels and Bannockburn tweeds are of the old designs, green being a particularly strong color.

Cheviots are offered in the knickerbocker pattern; snow flake, dots and dashes, enclosed in large squares, two sides of which are more defined than the others opposite, the size varying from extremely large to small panes. There are also knickerbocker cheviots, without the parallelogram figures; these are particularly effective, seen in flakes, dots and dashes. The same material appears in very bright navy blue, and black diagonals of varying widths, with the patterns less pronounced. Heavy cheviot tweeds are popular for short, tight-fitting jackets. Henrietta cloths appear in light tints of fawn, grey, navy blue, browns, granites, cardinals, etc. German brocades are seen in blacks and fawns, with tracery and foliage designs. They are chiefly in request for dolmans, cloaks, &c.,