

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION.

The money spent by our neighbors in improving their ports is often referred to by speakers who urge that something is required in the way of bringing British facilities up to date. So far as France is concerned, and covering the period from prior to 1876 and from that year up to 1891, *Le Journal des Chambres de Commerce* (Paris) quotes the following statement (in millions of francs) as representing the expenditure on French port works:—

Ports of	Up to 1876.	From 1876 to 1891.	Total.
The Channel and ocean ...	440	461	901
Mediterranean	124	58	182
Corsica	8	12	20

Total..... 572 531 1,103
This sum [equal to about £44,000,000] was not, our contemporary points out, raised entirely from users of the ports, but a notable part of the expense was borne by the towns, departments, and Chambers of Commerce. Havre has cost the most—responsible for the expenditure of 163 million francs, of which 95 before 1876, and 68 since; Dunkirk follows with 104 millions, of which 21 before 1876, 83 since; and Marseilles third, with 94 millions, 62 before, and 32 since 1876. Then follow Bordeaux, costing 63 millions; Calais, 52; Rouen, 51; and Dieppe, Boulogne, St. Nazaire, Cette, and Nantes between 30 and 40 million francs. Fecamp has cost 21 millions, Brest 19, and Cherbourg only 9. The works remaining to be undertaken in 1891 to complete the original scheme were estimated to cost 120 million francs, divided over—Havre 3 millions, Dunkirk 28 millions, St. Nazaire 2½ millions, Calais 3½ millions, Dieppe 2 millions, La Rochelle 2½ millions, Bayonne ½ million, Nantes 2½ millions, Brest 3,680,000, Treport 2 millions, Fecamp 1 million, Cette 1½ millions, Marseilles 2 millions, Bouc 4 millions, and Corsica 891,000 francs. From 1876 to 1891 the tonnage dues approached 60 million francs for the whole of the ports of France and Corsica.—*Commerce, London.*

STRAIGHT RAILWAY TRACKS.

We sometimes hear of long stretches of straight railway track and its great advantage in cheapness and safety of travel. We are now told, or rather the *Edmonton Times* is told by H. Brown, surveyor on the Soo Line, that the greatest stretch of straight railway track—more scientifically termed "tangent"—in North America, is to be found on the new Soo line of the C. P. R. beginning a few miles from Pasqua. It continues for seventy miles and is altogether in Canadian territory. The next longest is west of St. Thomas on the Canada Southern Railway, which is about 67 miles. The longest stretch of tangent in the world is to be found in the Argentine Republic and continues for 250 miles. This completely eclipses the model line of the Czar of Russia, from St. Petersburg to Moscow, which—taking a rule and placing it on the map—he ordered to be built perfectly straight. On the survey being made for the Czar's road, it was found that lakes, hills and rivers would not admit of this, and though as straight as possible, it is anything but a perfect tangent.

WHERE DID YOU GET THAT HAT?

A Frenchman in Buda-Pesth recently bought a hat of peculiar shape and color. He strolled about the platform of the station a few minutes waiting for a train, when he was astonished to find in one overcoat pocket a purse full of money and in another a gold watch. He went to the station master and found him listening to the complaints of a man who had just lost a purse. The purse was the one which the Frenchman was returning, but when it had been lost it had contained only a few francs, and now it held a large sum. The mystery was soon explained. A policeman came to the station master to report the arrest of a pickpocket. He was brought in and confessed the theft of the purse, into which had been put the proceeds of previous robberies. He had put the purse and the watch in the Frenchman's pockets because of his hat. He explained that hats of that pattern, which are made by only one firm, are the badge of a large international gang of pickpockets, and he had taken the Frenchman for a confederate.

HOW GREAT BRITAIN RAISES THE WIND.

In answer to a query regarding the manner in which Great Britain raises sufficient revenue to pay the expenses of the government, the *New York Commercial Advertiser* recently printed the following:—

It costs about \$440,000,000 a year to pay Great Britain's bills, sometimes more, sometimes less. Since and inclusive of 1889 the actual receipts have somewhat exceeded the budget, and the proportion of receipts from all sources is about \$11.50 per head of population. About five-sixths of the British revenues are derived from taxation under six heads, as follows: 1. Customs, as to which our correspondent especially enquires. Of this tobacco yields one-half; tea, coffee, currants, raisins, imported spirits and a number of other articles furnish the balance. Customs yield about \$100,000,000 yearly. 2. Excise, the largest item being the tax on the production and sale of spirits and beer, and a tax on railways. 3. Stamps, another large item, including probate and legacy duties, tax on legal papers, bills of exchange, patent medicines, etc. 4. Land tax, being a small item. 5. House duty, also small. 6. Income and property tax, yielding nearly one-fifth of the whole. In addition to taxation, other sources of revenue are the post office, which yields about \$50,000,000, the telegraph service, crown lands, etc.

THE PULLMAN CAR COMPANY.

The magnitude of the Pullman Sleeping Car Company is impressively indicated by the following figures from its annual statement just issued: Assets, \$61,791,643; capital stock, \$36,000,000; net surplus, \$25,791,643; earnings from cars last year, \$9,200,685; earnings from manufacturing and investments, \$2,189,190; total revenue, \$11,389,896; disbursements, including operating expenses and dividends, \$7,883,447; surplus for the year, \$4,006,448; number of cars—sleeping, dining, parlor and tourist—owned and controlled, 2,573; passengers carried last year, 5,673,129; mileage of railways covered by contracts, 126,975; number of employees, 14,635; wages for the year, \$7,751,644. Only ten years ago the assets were but \$23,095,369, the capital stock \$13,269,000, the earnings \$4,093,245, the number of cars 579. The continued growth of the company, in spite of competition and of the disposition of railway interests to take over all branches of the transportation business, is evidence of the wonderful executive and administrative force by which the business of building and operating sleeping cars has been maintained separate and distinct ever since Mr. Pullman organized his company in 1867.

A WORD FOR GEORGE VANCOUVER.

The Rev. W. H. Oxley is the vicar of the little Surrey village of Petersham, where rest the remains of Captain George Vancouver, and we owe it to him that the memory of this British hero has been rescued from oblivion. The *Canadian Gazette* notices Mr. Oxley's latest effort in the production, conjointly with Mr. E. Kirk, of a dainty little brochure in which artistic and poetic justice is done to the man whose naval enterprise and diplomatic skill gave England her foothold on the North Pacific, and to the place of which Vancouver once said:—"In all my travels I never clapt eyes on a more beautiful spot than this; here would I live, and here would I die." It may be remembered that on the hundredth anniversary of Vancouver's expedition to what we now call British Columbia, the *Illustrated London News* paid a fitting tribute to this little-known member of the company of English Empire-makers, and Mr. Oxley carries on the good work by his "Lines on the View from Petersham Hill," where

"... Courtiers, statesmen, cavaliers,
The Penns, Vancouver, Berrys, peers,
And peasants long since dead,
With Indians from some far-off shore,
Proud Lauderdale and many more,
Rest in their quiet bed."

—Beggars: "Please, sir, will you lend me a penny ter get somethin' to eat?" Gentleman: "You've got sixpence in your hand now. What's that for?" Beggar: "That's to tip th' waiter."

THE SEAL CATCH.

United States Consul Myers has received from the collectors of customs at Seattle and San Francisco the number of sealskins taken at those ports during the past season. The number of skins entered there brings the grand total of skins taken in the Pacific Ocean and Behring Sea up to 120,241. According to the report from San Francisco the twenty-two schooners hailing from that port took only 2,748 skins, the largest catch of any one schooner being less than 300. The Seattle schooners, fewer in number, brought in 6,874 skins.

The catch was divided as follows, showing that Victoria took the largest half of the skins:

Delivered at Victoria	70,001
Delivered at Seattle	6,874
Delivered at San Francisco:	
From 22 schooners	2,748
From Pribyloff Islands	7,425
From Petropaulovski	33,193

Total..... 120,241

BOOK-KEEPING FOR FARMERS.

In order to farm intelligently you must keep an account of your receipts and expenses. There must be a starting point for this, and it should be in the shape of an inventory of everything on the farm. Just after harvesting is a good time to make this inventory, although some prefer to start with the first of the year. Whichever time you choose, be honest with yourself and put down nothing at a dollar more than it will bring on the market. If you make the inventory now, and in this way, it may call your attention to the fact that some of the stock is hardly good enough to put up for winter feeding. Then get rid of it before you waste any money on it, and your profit and loss account for the coming year will be the gainer. This is one advantage of books and accounts on the farm—that it compels you to look matters in the face.

WIGWAM LOST, INDIAN ALL RIGHT.—The late monetary scare brought out this forceful statement of an important truth from a Western banker, who posted the following notice of suspension: "Gone, but not 'busted.' I owe the community \$5,000; the people owe me \$100,000; the people cannot pay; the people are 'busted.' When the people pay me, I will pay the people. In the meantime, let us all take a rest."

—They really are cutting down official expenditure in India at last, as the following story (for which the *Indian Mirror* is responsible) should testify: A gentleman had to go to a rural post-office the other day, and could not find the Babu. He was directed to a tree close by in which that official was discovered. "What on earth are you doing, Babu?" he asked. "Sir," was the reply, "our stationery allowance has been cut down, and I cannot afford to buy pins. Therefore, I have to go up this cursed babul morning and evening, and pick thorns to keep my papers together."

—Next year will witness the opening of another ship canal. This is the canal through the province of Holstein, which is to connect the Baltic with the North Sea. This is one of the enterprises conceived by Prince Bismarck, and began under his auspices, notwithstanding the opposition of the military strategists, who contended that the proposed canal would require an army corps for its defence. The canal is 60 miles in length, and its entire cost is estimated at £7,800,000. For more than half its length the canal is virtually straight, and there are no locks or sluices except at the two ends. Its depth throughout will be sufficient to allow all Baltic trading vessels to pass through it.

—The following tale of feminine perseverance, sent to a London paper by a correspondent, deserves record. The other morning a woman, while trying to get into a tramcar, fell, and, another tram passing by nearly ran over her. The horses passed over her, and she rolled over, just managing to escape being run over. When the tram had passed by, the woman (much to the excitement of the passers-by) got up from the ground, and ran after the tramcar, which she failed to catch the first time, and succeeded in catching it uninjured.