

Pacific strip into the Yukon region. Our Government in consenting to issue to Americans mining licenses at the boundary, instead of compelling them to go to the coast cities of British Columbia for them, has done so. Senator Mills tells of the promise of the United States Government to make concessions in return. What these concessions are has not yet been stated. The only prospect of an all-Canadian railway to the Yukon, which meets the eye at present, is in the action of the Legislature of British Columbia; and it remains to be seen whether the aid so granted will be equal to the emergency. If the Klondyke region be found to answer the expectations formed of it, other means of access besides that over the White Pass will be found. The British Columbia road would pass for a considerable distance over a good agricultural country, and would be useful for colonization purposes. In a greater degree this would be true of a road north from Edmonton. In time all these means of communication, and many more, will be needful; at present it is necessary to proceed with reasonable caution. Senator Mills' opposition to Hamilton Smith's bill for a railway from the Lynn Canal to a point near Selkirk, shows that the Government will not permit it to pass the House of Commons.

There is a bill before the Legislature of British Columbia to authorize the Government to borrow \$5,000,000 to be granted in aid of the construction of a number of railways, including a narrow gauge road from a British Columbia port to Lake Teslin, 400 miles long; another from English Bluff, near Point Roberts, via Chilliwack, 220 miles; a third from Bute Inlet to Quesnelle, 280 miles. The Governor-in-Council may make agreements with any person or company to undertake the construction and operation of the roads, without competition or calling for tenders. The roads when built will be the property of private parties; the province will get no claim on any of the earnings in return for its \$5,000,000. Is this the last word of Government railway finance?

A commission on national wheat stores in England, has reported in favor of a permanent reserve of 8,000,000 quarters, equal to 64,000,000 bushels. It seems as if the time had come when something of this kind is likely to be done. The quantity named, it is pointed out, would only last the British population fourteen weeks; but if a beginning be once made, the stock can be supplemented as occasion may offer. The grain so stored would have to be guarded against whatever tended to its destruction, and the question would arise whether bread food could be best preserved in the form of grain or of flour. By compression, experiments seem to prove flour can be preserved in a perfect state for a long time. The world could easily supply the additional demand, and a simple notice that an extra quantity would be required, would probably at once cause the production of even a greater quantity. People who talk of Canada being made the chief source of supply of wheat for England, have surely not reflected on the consequences of a possible deficiency in the harvest of a single country, or borne in mind that while harvests fail here and there, such a thing as a general failure of the world's harvests has now become impossible. In any extra demand for wheat to be kept as a reserve against war, Canada's chance of contributing to the supply would be among the best.

United Italy, before it has had time to consolidate its various parts, is vexed with revolutionary movements. There has been serious fighting at Milan, where 300 are

reported killed and 1,000 wounded. Republicans and Socialists appear to have joined their forces in the outbreak, which was not fortuitous, but made in pursuance of a regular plan. Once more the unexpected has happened. The danger which threatened the Quirinal was supposed to centre in the Vatican. When the present Pope succeeded Pius IX., he gave indications of pursuing a new policy, by accepting accomplished facts; but as time went on he, too, like his predecessor, spoke of himself as a prisoner in his palace of nine thousand rooms. He has not, however, repeated the threat of appealing to 300,000,000 of Catholics to aid in recovering the civil power and the territory that went with it. If the French Empire had survived, the danger of intervention from that quarter would have recurred under circumstances such as now exist. The policy of France was always, so far as she had the choice, to have weak states for neighbors; and a divided Italy would probably suit her better now than a united Italy ruled from the Quirinal. Austria might possibly become a danger to King Humbert's government, if there were any chance of recovering the possessions which she formerly held in the peninsula.

HOW IS BUSINESS?

Replies to this query are more hopeful this month than they have been for a good while before. The feeling that a good year's trade is assured seems general in Canada. Whether manufacturers or importers are consulted, the tenor of their replies is generally that their customers are in good spirits, ordering freely and paying better than usual. The dry goods houses have been busy as a rule. A Montreal house says its orders are greater by one-third than those of last year at same time; a Toronto house tells us that its turnover far exceeds any recent spring season; others are disappointed with April orders, but say that orders for fall are very good. Wholesale grocers in Hamilton, Toronto and Montreal, find business in good shape—orders steady, customers confident and cheerful; failures few. And what is very significant, the business of several wholesale jewelry and fancy goods houses shows a very marked increase; in one case the output is doubled for the first four months this year. This being the case in a line of trade of the nature of luxuries, shows that people are freehanded. The enforced economy of the last few years throughout the Dominion has resulted in an addition to people's means, which now permits them to do shopping with some freedom.

Among manufacturers a very similar story is told. From Peterboro, Galt, Brantford, as well as from Sherbrooke, Montreal and Toronto accounts of plentiful orders and full employment in the foundries, engine works and other allied industries are the rule. Very satisfactory word comes from Brantford as to the condition of such works. Some of the factories have been working extra time for weeks, others for months. The Waterous Engine Works Company are obliged to work nights to keep up with orders; the same may be said of the Cockshutt Plough Works. Agricultural implement makers are busy; the Massey-Harris Company and also the Verity Plough Company are working extra hours. In the same city the Gould Bicycle Company are working two sets of hands, one for day and one for night, and yet are unable to keep up with commands. Textile mills, too, are busy, as letters from the Province of Quebec and various parts of Ontario attest. The group of knitting mills in half a dozen places in this province have been working nights to keep pace with orders, which were largely for Klondyke trade. Clothing houses are also well employed.