

applies to this class as much as to business men. The hours of labor for ordinary working-men and mechanics have gradually been shortened, however, and undoubtedly the tendency is still in the same direction, probably more rapidly than ever before. The time when eight hours will constitute a day's work, is probably not in the very distant future.

### Editorial Notes.

EGGS in eastern Canada markets last week were 5 to 7c higher than a year ago. The McKinley bill does not seem to have got in its work yet, on the Canadian egg trade.

A CONVENTION of unusual importance was held at Toronto last week. This was the convention of those interested in the mineral development of that Province. It was decided to recommend the Ontario Government to establish a department of mines, with a ministerial head. It was also decided to urge the Government to establish a provincial museum, and sundry amendments to the laws and regulations affecting mining were agreed to. Ontario, as well as other parts of Canada, is rich in minerals, and this effort to develop these great resources of our country, is very considerable.

THE town council of Regina has decided to dismiss civic officials who give "evidence of the use of intoxicants." If this rule were applied to Dominion Government employees in the territories, there would be a good many vacancies to fill in a brief time. Of course there are officials to whom this does not apply, but there are many to whom it will apply. On a recent trip through the territories, the majority of those observed under the influence of liquor, were Dominion officials, including some whose special duty it is to enforce the restrictive measures against intoxicants. A drunken row at one place was chiefly participated in by officials whose office is to preserve the peace of the community.

In a recent speech on the trade of the Empire, Sir George Baden Powell said, "In considering any question of the commercial union of the Empire, the aim should be to remove, and not to create, every obstacle to trade with other countries." This statement from the British statesman quoted, should open the eyes of some colonists, upon the question at issue. The general idea in the colonies is probably to the effect that the colonies would be benefitted by the cutting off of trade between Great Britain and foreign countries. If the commercial union of the Empire were once accomplished, then the Empire could treat as a whole for favorable trade treaties with foreign countries. A commercial union of the Empire, on a free trade basis, might therefore be worked as a lever for spreading free trade throughout the world.

THOSE who fancy that in a few years the United States will not produce wheat enough for its home consumption, should think a while of the vast extent of land suitable for wheat, which has not yet been brought under cultivation. The Minneapolis *Market Record* is our authority for the statement that only six per cent. of the land in the state of Minnesota is under wheat cultivation. And yet with this small percentage sown to wheat, Minnesota is the banner wheat state of the Union. The paper

mentioned above says: "If four per cent. of the land area of the 16 leading wheat states were cultivated to wheat, the acreage would equal the entire wheat acreage of this country. If 30 per cent. of the dry lands in the 16 states referred to were given to wheat cultivation, a crop of 12 bushels an acre would exceed the entire wheat production of the world." This does not look like importing wheat for home requirements a few years hence. If wheat prices were materially advanced, it is evident that the acreage would soon be vastly increased.

THIS is the time of the year when the demoralizing effects of bankruptcies is most observable. The annual crop of spring failures has been reaped, and bankrupt stocks have been thrown on the market, all over the country, exerting a baneful influence upon trade, and completely demoralizing business at some points. Merchants who are striving to do an honest business, and meet their obligations in full, have good reason to complain of this pernicious slaughter of bankrupt stocks. It certainly is very discouraging to those who pay 100 cents on the dollar, to be compelled to meet this kind of competition, and fight through a season of slaughter sales every now and again. One of these slaughter sales started leads to others following suit, until sometimes the season's trade of a town is destroyed, and instead of profits, there is a general loss. Good men are forced out of business by this system of slaughtering goods. The business of others is rendered unprofitable, and thus further failures are brought on. In fact it is next to impossible to do a profitable business in some towns, on account of the generally demoralized condition resulting from the slaughter of one stock after another. It seems that the situation demands a strong effort of some kind to provide a means of obviating the pernicious slaughter of bankrupt stocks.

A WASHINGTON state paper gives a list of United States sealing schooners which have been placed under the British flag, and entered at Victoria, B. C. There are eleven schooners in the list, with an average capacity of seventy tons each. Three more schooners are said to be on their way to Victoria to change their flag, and several more are expected to follow suit. The reason given is, that these schooners will be sent into Behring sea to hunt seal, and they wish to be placed under the protection of the British flag. If they go flying the stars and stripes, they will be seized, under the proclamation of the President declaring Behring sea closed to any but the vessels of the Alaska sealing monopoly company. British sealers have refused to be bound by the President's proclamation, and with assurance that they will be protected, they have gone boldly into the sea. Private schooners flying the United States flag have no source to look to for protection, and they were obliged to stand by and see the "Canucks take the seals. This is one of the amusing features of Mr. Blaine's jug policy in the Behring sea affair. Canadian schooners have not been prevented from going into the sea to hunt seal, and the number of our schooners of this class going north, has increased vastly since the order to close Behring sea was first issued. On the other hand,

United States schooners have been forced to seek the protection of the British flag, in order to carry on operations in the sea. This situation must be very galling to the people of the republic, and one would imagine that Mr. Blaine will now be anxious to have the matter settled, so as to have this sorry spectacle of his "vigorous foreign policy" removed out of sight as quickly as possible.

### Pool Legislation.

THE era of fool state legislation is here. All over the United States, bills are being introduced in local legislatures which if they become laws will inevitably cripple and ultimately destroy the manufacturing interests at which they are aimed. There is considerable anti-railroad legislation going on of a more or less idiotic character, but about this we are less concerned. Railroads have a little way of their own of evening up on the public, and we must say that they generally arrive at the death with the most disastrous effect on the state which encourages extreme anti-railroad measures.

When it comes to manufacturers, however, we must say that our sympathies are enlisted. They have much to contend with in the natural course of trade. Competition is keen, markets are limited, over-production always imminent. Add to these already serious dangers, that of adverse legislation, and the result may well be enough to discourage industry and drive it from the field in which it is striving to gain a foothold, and in which its success means a living for the thousands who are employed by it. In the western states we can now witness this incongruous sight; enterprising cities and villages on the one hand are offering sites and bonuses to new manufactories, while, on the other, ignorant, unscrupulous and vicious politicians are striving might and main to pass laws which will inflict serious injury upon them. In the legislature of North Dakota a bill recently introduced making every mill in the state a public one, belongs to this class of legislation, and the most mischievous and altogether vicious measure which it has been our lot to note is that known as the personal injury bill.

The above is from the *Northwestern Miller*, of Minneapolis. The "personal injury bill" referred to provides that proprietors must be responsible for the maintenance of persons injured while in their employ.

CHICAGO is probably afflicted with a greater number of real estate sharks, says *Equity*, of that place, than any other city in the world. One has but to look over the alluring offers set forth in the Sunday editions of the daily papers, and to possess the qualification of being able to read between the lines, to fully realize the dangers to which intending investors are exposed. While there are undoubtedly many reputable firms and individuals engaged in the real estate business, the fact is indisputable that at least eight tenths of the real estate speculators of Chicago are frauds of the first water. The schemes of manipulation carried on by these gentry have reached such a pass that it is dangerous to make any transaction in reality, except through brokers of the very first standing, those whose name and reputation is of itself sufficient guarantee; and the number of such firms is decidedly limited.