

Grocers and Groceries.

It requires a combination of business qualities to make a successful grocer, says Pennsylvania Grocer. He must be a good judge of the commodities which he handles, must have a knowledge of values, and must know the peculiarities of his customers. Possessing these gifts, and paying strict attention to business, his chances for a successful career are good.

There is a sort of fashion in groceries, as in dry goods and other articles. What is popular and active in one place may be dead stock in another. A Liberty street wholesaler said the other day that he had a great run on a certain brand of canned corn in West Virginia, but found very little sale for it in Ohio, where another brand was all the go. Neither of these brands suited the Pennsylvania market. It is the same with almost everything. Flour and coffee are conspicuous examples of this diversity of tastes, as shown by the multitude of brands and blends that are in the market.

The grocer must study and cater to these peculiarities of taste to be successful. He may, by persistent effort, overcome local idiosyncrasies; but if he be a wise man, as his calling demands, he will follow the wishes of his customers, and keep his own ideas in the background.

The closer the grocer studies these things the better for him. He cannot do as he pleases. He will find it more popular to follow than to lead. If he wants to play the role of a reformer he must work very carefully, or he will arouse such antagonism as will make his position very uncomfortable. He must insinuate his personality into the community. He cannot do it by direct attack. By pursuing this policy he may effect valuable reforms in the tastes and manners of his patrons.—*Exchange.*

The Alaskan Boundary.

Some account of the efforts already made to define the boundary line between Alaska and British America, and of what is proposed to be done in the same direction in the near future, is given by Superintendent Mendenhall, of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, in a recent syndicate article. Recalling the fact that the boundary line in question was originally defined in the treaty of 1825 between England and Russia, he says that when the treaty of cession to the United States was made in 1867 the boundaries of the country ceded, as far as related to the eastern limit, were defined precisely as in the treaty of 1825. The boundary line consists of two parts, one of which is astronomical and the other natural. The astronomical line is the 141st meridian of west longitude, which forms the major part of the boundary between the territory and British America. This line runs from the Arctic ocean southward to a point in the vicinity of Mount St. Elias, which is within a few miles of the shores of the north Pacific. In order to locate points on this line it is only necessary to determine latitude and longitude. A surveying party was sent in 1889 to make observations for boundary purposes. In 1892 the lower end of the meridian was fixed by observations in the neighborhood of Mount St. Elias. It was found that the meridian passed through the mountain but not through its summit.

The remaining portion of the boundary is determined by an irregular line extending along the coast from the point where the 141st meridian touches Mount St. Elias down to latitude 54° 40'. This line encloses a long and narrow but important strip of territory, the eastern limit of which is up to the present undetermined. The treaty begins by providing that the line is to proceed along the parallel of 54° 40' eastward until the Portland Canal is reached, and to ascend along this canal until it reaches the parallel of 56°. The only ground for contention thus far is as to what body of water the name Portland Canal belongs, though Superintendent Mendenhall thinks that there is little room for such contention. It is what

follows that has given rise to controversy. According to the treaty, setting out from the intersection of the Portland Canal and the parallel of 56° the "line of demarcation shall follow the summit of the mountains situated parallel to the coast as far as the point of intersection of the 141st degree of west longitude." Here the existence of a range of mountains parallel to the coast is assumed. Such a range was shown on the old sketch maps of 1825. At present it is believed that no such range exists. It is possible, Superintendent Mendenhall says, that a doubt existed in the minds of the treaty makers, for in another article it was agreed that whenever the summit of such range should prove to be more than ten marine leagues (about thirty-five miles) from the ocean the boundary should be formed by a "line parallel to the windings of the coast, and which shall never exceed the distance of ten marine leagues therefrom."

The opinion is expressed that that part of the boundary line which consists of the 141st meridian will be accepted by Great Britain as located by the United States surveying parties. A convention was entered into last year between the United States and Canada for a joint survey of that part of the boundary line which separates the narrow strip of territory known as Southeast Alaska from British Columbia. The survey is under the charge of two commissioners, of whom the superintendent of the Coast and Geodetic Survey is one. Surveying parties started for the destination indicated two months or so ago. The plan of operations is thus indicated by Superintendent Mendenhall: "For the coming season operations will be confined to the vicinity of three rivers which cross the narrow strip of territory involved. They begin just north of the Portland Canal, and are the Uuk, the Sitkin and the Taku. At the mouths of these rivers astronomical stations will be established and temporary observatories erected. Latitude will be determined by observation, and longitude by means of a number of chronometers, which will be carried by the Coast survey steamer Hassler from Sitka to these stations, once after the other, and back to Sitka, making a round trip as often as once in two weeks during the season. Difference of longitude, as every one knows, is simply difference of time. The longitude of Sitka was determined very accurately in the campaign of 1892. By transporting chronometers from Sitka, where an astronomical station will also be maintained, to each of the other points in turn the respective differences in local time between these stations and Sitka will be made known. The mouths of the rivers being thus accurately located, a survey of each river by a system of triangulation from the mouth to a distance of at least ten marine leagues from the coast will be executed. Topographers will also be engaged in reconnaissance of the interior between these rivers for the purpose principally of determining whether there exists a range of mountains parallel to the coast." It is pointed out that where an accurate delineation of the several rivers crossing the territory is available, showing their courses, directions and distances, it will be possible for a commission to agree on a boundary line made up of straight lines joining selected points on those rivers which will be in practical agreement with the second definition as found in the treaty. Mr. Mendenhall says that in his opinion this is the only rational solution of the problem, for he regards the first definition in the treaty as impossible, and the second, if literally interpreted, as impracticable.—*Bradstreet.*

Progress of British Shipping.

The Newcastle Chronicle says:—"Shareholders in steamships may obtain only limited dividends, but shipping business enlarges in extent in the United Kingdom. The parliamentary paper recently issued on the subject is so full of tables that it is difficult for the uninitiated to follow them. A comparison taken from one of these tables, however, will illustrate the growth very fairly. The table below shows the tonnage of vessels, sailing and steam, that entered and cleared from ports in the United Kingdom in the years named for British and foreign vessels:—

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Year.	British Tons	Foreign Tons
1860.....	13,914,000	10,774,000
1870.....	25,072,000	11,568,000
1880.....	41,348,000	17,387,000
1892.....	43,670,000	17,820,000
1892.....	54,372,000	21,491,000

Thus in thirty-two years the trade done by the British vessels at our own ports has been about quadrupled, while that done by foreign vessels at our ports has scarcely been doubled, so that over the record of a little more than three decades we have no reason to complain. One of the causes of the lower ratio of growth in foreign vessels as distinct from British is that the American tonnage entering and leaving our ports has decreased with some rapidity for about sixteen years, while Italian vessels have also fallen off. The increase in the case of the British vessels is, of course, mainly due to the larger portion of work that is done by steamships. In 1860 the steam tonnage (British, that is) did less than one-third of the total; last year they did eight-ninths of that total. The larger work entails a larger fleet, and thus merchant ships of the British empire have increased in a manner which the following tabular statement makes clear:—

Year.	Tons.	Year.	Tons.
1860.....	5,710,000	1880.....	8,417,000
1870.....	7,149,000	1892.....	10,288,000

Here, again, the increase is due in the greatest part to the increase of the steamships; indeed, in the period that is covered by the contrast a large part of that navy has been transferred from sailing to steamships. And that transfer is the explanation for the greater rapidity of the growth of the work than the increase of the working vessels. The tonnage has been nearly doubled, whilst the work done has been about quadrupled. And it is a singular feature of the alteration in merchant shipping that the employment of seamen is in proportion to the tonnage much less than it was thirty or forty years ago. The use of machinery, the alteration in the propelling power, and the increased efficiency of that power, enable our ships to be worked with a very material reduction of the proportion of men to the tonnage. It is probable that the increase in the merchant shipping will not be so large in the immediate future as it has been in recent years—the dullness in shipbuilding must have its effect on the output of the present year; and the condition of the shipping trade itself must influence the building of the future. But the figures we have given prove how greatly the merchant shipping industries of the United Kingdom have been enlarged in the last few decades, and give some guarantee that we can now allow the shipbuilding industries to have a partial rest for a time."

Proposed Northern Russian Railway.

The London Iron and Coal Trade Review says:—"Fears are entertained that financial considerations are likely to delay the construction of the proposed railway from St. Petersburg to the Arctic ocean, a project in which much interest is felt in commercial circles. The railway, which would be between 700 and 800 miles long and cost six millions, would enormously benefit trade by opening up a large agricultural district and placing the Arctic fisheries in communication with a market, and it would also give Russia a naval station on her northern coast. The latter has been a dream of the present as well as the late Czar, and Port Vladimir has for years been marked as the site. Port Vladimir is a little to the north of Archangel, and possesses the great merit of being open to ships in winter as well as in summer, while it is said to be easily capable of fortification."