THE COMMERCIAL.



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Launch of the "Empress of Japan," The "Empress of Japan" the second of the three steel twin-screw steamers built for the Canadian Focific Railway Company, was launched on Saturday last from the yard of the Naval Construction and Armaments Company at Barrow-in-Furness The third is at present in course of construction. These vessels are, as our readers know, intended to sail from Vancouver to Yokohama, and will cover the distance in considerably less time than it is done at present. The "Empress of Japan" is 485 ft. long over all, 440 ft. hetween perpendiculars, breadth moulded 51 ft., depth moulded 36 ft., tonnage 5,700 tons gross. The engines will indicate about 10,000 horse power. She, like her sister ships, has been built to Admiralty requirements as a cruiser, and can be armed and made ready for duty in a few hours, her guns being stored in readiness at Vancouver and Hong Kong. Her armaments will consist of the largest type of 4.7 in. guns.

Lord Hartington, at a subsequent lunch, proposed "Success to the "Empress of Japan," which, he said, was the second of three ships which the Naval Construction and Armaments Company was building for the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, and which, when completed, were destined to run from Vancouver to Japan and China. The Barrow company was, he said, proud that Lady Allice Stanley had performed the ceremony of launching this ship, because not only was Lord Stanley of Preston, her father-in-law, connected with this district, but was at the present time still more intimately connected with Canada; and although he (Lord Hartington) had once suffered a severe defeat at his hands, his lordship was now Governor-General of a Dominion which was largely interested in these vessels. He had only one other observation to make, and that was that, although these ships would form the connecting. link between Canada and Japan and China, the Canadian route would not be so complete and perfect as it was capable of being made until communication was established by a first-class line of vessels between England and Canada direct. He trusted through the agency of the Naval Construction and Armaments Company, and by the active exertions of their managing director, Mr. Bryce Douglas, who had recently

been to Canada on this very important matter, that in short time e new enterprise would be lounched, which would open up direct communication with British ports and Canadian Atlantic ports, an thence by means of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway, open up steam communication not only with China and Japan but with the Australasian Colonies. Circumstances connected with the State business of this country might perhaps somewhat delay the inception of this enterprise, but he had not the slightest doubt that, sooner or later, the enterprise would be completed, and that the Barrow Company would play a very considerable part in establishing this very valuable communication. He gave the toast of the "Empress of Japan, '-Canadian Gazette, London, England, Dec. 8.

Furs in London.

The London, Eugland, correspondent of the New York Fur Trade Review writes as follows to that journal :- The season 1890 has just drawn to a close, and taken all round has been a very fair year for the fuc trade generally. At the beginning of the season the outlook was not at all promising, but as soon as trade began to move it was seen that a very large business would be done in Persians, and this article has done remarkably well throughout, and as it is an article that runs into mouey it has helped the fur trade very considerably, and then on top of this the "boom" in fur seals has enabled some of the old established merchants in this city to clear out stocks that have been accumulating for years past, for it is well known that during the last month or six weeks that anything in the shape of a fur seal could be sold almost blindfolded, and we are of the opinion that both these articles will sell well the coming season.

The article that has sold for the million has been Moufflon. Very large quantities have changed hands, but the profits have been closely cut, in many instances like giving 100 cents for a dollar. Another article that has done exceedingly well is Australian opossum, some hundreds of thousands of which have been cut into narrow edgings for the trimmings of cloaks and jackets. This style of trimmings has come about in this way. Squirrel lock and back linings having been so high in price the manufacturers have ceased to use them to a large extent and in their place have used a quilted lining with just this narrow edging of opossum all round the garment. Our opinion of this article is that it will have a good run next season.

Grey krimmer. This article has been in fair demand, but exclusively for the West End trade.

Bears. This article has sold very well in trimmings, but boas have been at a discount, this has come about by a great rage for the Medici collar, in fact scarcely any garment for a lady will sell here without one of these collars. Skunk has also done very well and we believe will do better still next season.

Nutria has been sold very freely, especially the German lustred skins—our friends on the Continent having greatly improved the appearance of this article indeed it runs the London silvering very hard and we belive will knock it out entirely next year.

The Quebec provincial government has granted this year a bonus of fifty cents per ton on beets delivered to manufacturers, and a special commission has been authorized to study the question of sugar beet culture to go to Europe, the United States and Ontario and report at the next session of the legislature.

The Nipissing & James Bay railway company has purchased the right of way from Lanase, which is the northern terminus of the Nipissing railway, to a point in the immediate vicinity of North Bay, and put it in readiness for construction of the road. The Ontario government has granted the company a honus of \$3,000 per mile for the first fifty miles which will take the road to Lake Samogeaming. Eighty miles will be the length of the first section, extending from North Bay to Lake Temiscamique. Application will be made_to the Dominion Parliament at the next session for the usual bonds and if secured the directors intend to commence construction at once.

The farmer's Advocave, published at London, Out., and Winnipeg, sends out with its Christmas number a handsome portrait of Hon. John Carling, Dominion Minister of Agriculture.