

Hay Seeds. The title of some newspapers is often so incongruous as to be ironical. The "New York Sun" for instance, which, instead of pouring light upon the world, has been for several years doing its utmost to darken counsel with false words respecting Canada. The "Sun" has been busy with the task of hiding, obscuring, quenching the light, by gross misrepresentations of Canadian sentiment. The "Sun" has told its readers a fairy tale daily for years about the annexation movement in Canada, which was wholly a product of its own imagination. So much for the "New York Sun" as a creator of darkness. The Philadelphia "Intelligencer" shows how ironical its title is by calling the people of Canada "the hayseeds over the border." If that is "intelligence" then ignorance must be knowledge and wisdom, and rudeness—which always shows a lack of intelligence—must be courtesy. For the information of the Philadelphia "Intelligencer," we beg to say that the average culture, intelligence, mental alertness and knowledge of men and things of the people of Canada is higher than those of the Americans. We are not so "smart" as some of our neighbours in some things. For example, Canadians are not such "hayseeds" as to give up their cities to gangs of swindlers like "Tammany" or those boodlers who systematically pull the wool over the eyes, while they rob the pockets of the simple-minded, the "hayseeds" of Philadelphia. Dwellers in the city of Brotherly Love should keep a civil tongue in their heads and not insult a neighbour.

**British
Shipbuilding,
1901.**

A statement has been issued showing the extent of the shipbuilding trade of Great Britain last year as compared with 1900. Returns are given from 88 firms engaged in this industry. The number of vessels built in British shipyards was 654, the gross tonnage of which was 1,254,150 tons. This is exclusive of the vessels built by 17 other firms whose returns have not been received. Out of the 88 firms more than half report having exceeded the business of 1901. The firms that built fewer boats last year than in 1900 appear to have been engaged in constructing a small class of vessels. The demand is not now as active as it was early in 1901, but production cannot go on enlarging indefinitely beyond consumption and the needs of expanding trade. If the shipyards this year keep up the record of 1901 they will have good reason for satisfaction. At a dinner of the London shipbrokers Mr. Gerald Balfour said the transfer of British vessels to foreign flags had occasioned a great deal of comment in the last few years. In the past year British vessels of

600,000 gross tons had been transferred to foreign flags, but in the same period there were added to the British register 1,200,000 gross tons, and then he mentioned the important fact that 93 per cent. of the additions to British registry were new vessels, nearly all constructed in the United Kingdom, while a third of the vessels transferred to foreign flags were built before 1885 and 55 per cent. of them were built before 1890. In other words, British owners are selling their old vessels and getting new ones. He said no Englishman could be indifferent to the efforts of foreign nations to get the carrying trade away from England, for the greatness of the British Empire rested upon the shipping industry as it did not on any other; still he saw no reason for alarm, and he evidently had no idea of resorting to any new devices for the promotion of the merchant marine, for he said that if Englishmen "were true to their old traditions of energy and enterprise, and that resolute purpose which had built up for this country the dominion of the sea, they would be able to defend and maintain the position which they so gloriously held."

United States Insurance Co. Failures. Lists of fire insurance companies that have retired from business in the United States are given in "The Insurance Press," each State being credited with its quota.

Counting such a string of failures being too tedious, we measured them by a tape and found them to aggregate 9 feet 6 inches! As the average inch contains between 7 and 8 names of fire companies that gave up business, the total number is about 1,200. Our contemporary classifies these unfortunates under the titles, Defuncts, Cadavers, Illusions, Corpses, Spectres, Spooks, Wrecks, Smashes, Obliterations, Tragedies, and other lugubrious names. One list contains the names of 29 foreign companies that became too "fatigued" to continue in operation in the United States.

In compiling the lists it publishes of fire insurance companies that have failed, "The Insurance Press" has aimed mainly to show two things—that evidence and experience concerning the difficulties surrounding the fire insurance business exist in nearly every important city; and that the necessity for a broad average of risks makes purely local insurance projects unsafe, and, therefore, undesirable. In every city and town the relative efficiency of the fire departments and water supplies is of prime importance.

American fire insurance is approaching a more scientific basis than it has rested upon hitherto, and the methods by which insurance rates are being determined are of a kind that the people can readily ascertain and understand.