

**Australia the Prosperous.** The Commonwealth of Australia is likely to have an income in its first year from natural products far exceeding any on record. The losses owing to the terrible mortality among its sheep for several years are being largely made up by increased prices of wool. The wheat crop is estimated to reach 50 million bushels, of which two fifths will be available for export. The gold fields are likely to yield as much as the Transvaal did last year, which was \$79,214,000. If this is realized it will exceed the Australian supply of 1898 by 15 millions of dollars, which, with the Klondyke output, would go far to counteract any trouble arising from the Transvaal supply being cut off. The meeting of Australian volunteers and Canadian on the battle-field in South Africa will be an event of the highest historic interest. It will have an effect on Imperial policy, involving the gravest, and we believe the happiest consequences by consolidating the British Empire and demonstrating its solidarity in the face of the rest of the world.

**Pulp-wood and Nickle.**

So far as its constitutional and proprietary rights extend the Government of Ontario has decided to prohibit the exportation of nickle, in any form, and pulp-wood from the Province of Ontario. An effort will be made to interest the British Government in the production of nickle. We doubt the success of this movement, as it is not in accord with the established policy of the home authorities. There is no need for assistance from the English Government in developing our mineral deposits. Let it be once fully established that our nickle can be profitably smelted in Canada, and made a paying merchantable product, there will be all the necessary capital forthcoming to carry on this industry. Nickle is coming into demand for mixing with steel for railway rails. Machinists have discovered that nickle gives to steel a peculiar quality which greatly enhances its value for all purposes where great tenacity and density of fibre are needed. The use of this metal consequently will no longer be confined to armour plates, but will be in universal demand wherever steel is smelted. We trust to see nickle-converting furnaces working soon in Canada. As to pulp-wood, its prohibition of export from Ontario will help to develop the pulp-paper industry in Canada. All these movements are in the right direction, as their purpose is to extend the sphere of native industry and native capital.

**Football Legislation.**

The extraordinary fascination that football has over the working classes in England has been recently manifested. An association in Lancashire, comprising the textile workers of that hive of industry is making an effort to secure an Act of Parliament by which all factories would be closed at 12 o'clock every Saturday instead of 1 o'clock as at present. This change is desired to

enable the workers to play football, or watch games. The Act would deduct 500,000 hours from the labour period in that county every week, which would be about equal to a loss in wages of \$40,000 every week, for, of course, the hour so given up would be deducted from wages. Lancashire work people must be exceptionally well off to be anxious to sacrifice such an enormous sum solely to get an hour's longer enjoyment of football; but this is the age of athleticism, and factory-workers need their muscles developing.

**Navigation Closed.**

On the 29th Nov., the last steamer to leave this port, this season, took her departure for the ocean. This is a day later than last year, when the Guildhall bade us good-bye. This annual event never comes without having a depressing influence on business generally, but on shippers and their employees especially. Although the navigation of the St. Lawrence is closed for a long period, it is open much longer than some affirm who seek to disparage Canada. A common statement is that our open season is only five months, but, if the closed time were named instead, this period would be correct. This port had an ocean vessel at its wharf, over seven months ago, and river craft were running even earlier. During the winter about setting in, there will probably be some extensive works carried on for improving the harbour, so that there will be employment, we hope, for a considerable body of labourers throughout the hard weather for those who are dependent for steady work upon the shipping.

**THE WAR SITUATION.**

The war situation is one which is intensely interesting, exciting and hopeful. The Australian volunteers have had their "baptism of blood" in an engagement with the Boers. The Canadian Contingent has landed at Cape Town, where our brave soldiers were enthusiastically welcomed. They will shortly be massed with their Australian and New Zealand brethren, with Natal volunteers and those from the Cape. Such a gathering will be an historic event unprecedented in history. In after times it will be said as it was of the Balaklava charge of the "noble six hundred," "All the world wondered." Such a spectacle of the military resources of the British Empire, of its being not "a mere paper expression," as some sneerers have said, but an actual consolidation of Great Britain and her Colonies, will have a profound effect upon all other nations. The Transvaal war is a demonstration that, wherever British subjects may be, the power of the whole Empire stands ready to guard them from oppression, to assure them their just rights, and to avenge their cause if it is righteous. "Civis Romanus sum" was the proud boast of each citizen of the Roman Empire in olden days, who knew that all the legions of that mighty power were his protectors. "I am a British citizen" is even a prouder boast, for he has the power of a vast Empire than has been, at