

bank, and at its counters, before 12:30 each day, payment of balances as certified to by the clearing-room supervisor, is to be made. These certificates are issued under the authority of an officer, probably a senior bank-clerk, present each day at the Clearing House. The Bank of Commerce, we believe, is to furnish the superintendent for the first month of the Clearing House operations. The institution has proved its value in Montreal, where, for a year and more, one has been in operation. It is in contemplation to establish one very shortly in Hamilton.

WEST INDIA TRADE.

Some things have been learned by Canada from the visits of her manufacturers or merchants to Jamaica and their exhibiting there. Some things need to be unlearned, too, it seems, as a result of inspection, on the spot, of trade prospects and methods. For one thing, it was for years believed that Canadian flour would not keep in the Tropics. That this was an unfounded belief is proved by the fact that it has been kept in Jamaica for ninety days, perfectly sweet. It is learned, too, however, that admirable as was our flour sent to the exhibition there, and fed to the delighted Jamaicans experimentally in the shape of bread and biscuit, it was too high in price to capture the market, though the better classes who can afford it will doubtless buy it. The island, which uses hundreds of thousands of barrels, has long been used to cheap flour from New York for the masses, and it has long been used to getting credit terms for the article, too. What is now recommended is that cheaper grades than the extra Manitoba flour exhibited at Kingston be shipped, and that arrangements be made that will put our merchants on a level with New York houses in the matter of terms. This is urged by Mr. Wolfred Nelson, who is writing a series of papers in the *Montreal Gazette* on commerce with Jamaica. He tells us that to ordinary customers in that island "a barrel of flour is a barrel of flour; to tell him that our Manitoba No. 1 is higher in nutritive properties and lower in moisture than a cheaper grade, is beyond him. The statement that eleven barrels of it are equal to fourteen barrels of New York flour sounds well; but when the Canadian is more expensive the effect is lost."

But a more serious statement is made by this correspondent: freights are too high. He declares that "The Canadian railway and steamship lines must assist the farmer by reducing all rates to the Atlantic seaboard, and the steam carriers by inaugurating a new and let-live policy—or cheap ocean freights. The present rates are almost prohibitory."

There appears to be no question that the Canadian goods shown in Jamaica were creditable as to quality. Curiously enough, the main objection to many appears to have been that they were too good. This applies not less to flour than it does to prepared meats, cheese, butter and cotton. Mr. Dimock, who represented us at the exhibition, says that a good impression has

been made, but if Canada is to have a foothold, she must meet local requirements, local tastes, etc. "If she demands recognition and offers herself as a competitor with the great nations of the earth, she will find early concessions will be necessary; she must reduce prices, carefully study it all, and the rest will take care of itself."

One singular statement we remark in Mr. Nelson's paper. He says that the United States makers for the markets of the West Indies, Mexico, South and Central America, do not compete successfully in manufactures with the Germans, English or Spanish because "they lack adaptability" and will not make goods to suit the fancies of different peoples. This is a surprise to us, for time and again we have read in British trade journals statements the exact converse of this, complaining most bitterly of Sheffield, or Birmingham, or Glasgow manufacturers for their stubborn adherence to old-fashioned patterns, while the Americans were stealing the trade from them by carefully consulting the desires of the South American market in style of goods and style of package. However, the lesson to be learned from what has been said is that the prejudices of the natives and the wishes of the West India merchants must be observed if we would cultivate trade there successfully.

There is, it appears, a steady demand in Jamaica for Canadian white pine, which is everywhere to be seen there, but that it was purchased in New York through middlemen. Very naturally Mr. Nelson asks, Why not reach the Kingston market direct? The spruce of the maritime provinces is almost useless in any hot climate, as wood-borers soon reduce it to a perfect honeycomb. "In fact, any wood that holds its sap is only food for the many voracious and destructive insects that infest the tropics." There were shipped from the Maritime provinces last year to the British West Indies \$150,000 worth of planks, boards, joists and scantling, "while Jamaica alone imports over five million (5,000,000) feet of white pine, almost every foot of which comes from New York. All this can be changed if Canadian lumbermen wish, and Canadian vessels could easily secure return cargoes of sugar, fruit, dye woods, etc. It awaits Canada." In the list which has been given by Mr. Dimock of merchandise for which Jamaica offers a market there, are named several articles that he says we need not send, because there is no likelihood of selling them. Among these are musical instruments, soaps, hats and caps, cottons, and horse power agricultural implements. We copy below what he says of other goods:

In boots and shoes only a fair demand. People, the masses, want cheap lines. England and the Americans hold the market, and continental makers, if they knew it, could undersell both.

In carriages Canada can do some business, but they must be built to suit the climate; special springs and covers are necessary.

Refrigerators.—There is a good demand for small ones for household purposes.

Drugs.—A good market is said to offer:

the average Jamaican is very fond of medicine—so they say.

In tinware some trade has already been done.

In tombstones, etc., a splendid market offers, says Mr. Dimock, and it can be controlled.

For cooking stoves he reports a good outlook.

In doors and shutters, if cheap, a good market offers. The exhibition has made all these things very prominent.

In homespuns and tweeds a good market offers for certain grades; some sales were made.

In furniture a good market offers for cheap furniture.

In ready-made clothing, if cheap, a good market also; a number of orders have already been taken.

We are glad to learn that Mr. Adam Brown, and Mr. Black, of Messrs. Pickford, Black & Co., Halifax, have been conferring this week with the Canadian Pacific and Grand Trunk railways in regard to the granting of through bills of lading of all goods from Canada to the West Indies and *vice versa*, with a rapid transit from the seaports.

TORONTO TRADE FIGURES.

The May imports and foreign exports at Toronto were rather less than those of April. The bulletin of the Board of Trade, which we received last week, but could not use owing to the crowded state of our columns, gives the value of imports last month as \$1,411,703, and of exports \$282,936. Total, \$1,694,639. In April the imports were \$1,486,256, and the exports \$233,106. Total, \$1,719,362. The principal items of imports will be found in the following table, compared with those of the previous May instead of the previous month:

IMPORTS.		
	May, 1891.	May, 1890.
Cotton goods	\$109,115	\$ 83,736
Fancy goods.....	32,423	35,878
Hats and bonnets....	34,143	23,650
Silk goods	27,743	44,602
Woollen goods	87,463	81,440
Total dry goods.....	\$290,887	\$269,306
Books and pamphlets ...	\$ 22,264	\$32,546
Grain of all kinds.....	39,330	
Coal, anthracite	25,435	
" bituminous		25,899
Drugs and medicines ...	23,332	27,339
Earthen and chinaware ..	18,806	17,363
Fruit, green and dried....	34,979	25,036
Glass and glassware.....	46,294	41,766
Iron and steel goods	116,237	128,697
Jewellery and watches ...	14,454	15,318
Leather goods	23,159	23,122
Musical instruments	14,742	9,943
Paper goods	43,904	37,404
Lead goods	16,403	18,934
Paints and colors	12,684	10,501
Spirits and wines	10,320	11,046
Wood goods	18,401	24,842

In exports, too, we have made the table show May, 1890, compared with May, 1891. There is nothing of striking interest in the list.

GOODS THE PRODUCT OF CANADA, EXPORTED.

Produce of		
	May, '91.	May, '90.
The Mine.....	\$ 308	\$
The Fisheries.....	723	
The Forest	45,483	71,010
The Field	68,568	71,116
Animals and their produce	85,787	46,397
Manufactures	97,719	117,995
Miscellaneous		
Total.....	\$248,588	\$306,518