

mines, another says, not so; the ore is still in the mines and therefore cannot be lost. In this reply we get a glimpse of statesmanship and knowledge of economics that is positively blinding in its brilliancy. Why all this bother and excitement over mines and mining and eight-hour days and companies and syndicates and capital? It is all a waste of temper and energy. We are rich without it. The ore is in the mines; what more can we want? To dig it out and smelt it makes it no more valuable, nor adds to the wealth of the country. Close up the hole and come away; as long as the ore is there you are rich, if you but have imagination enough to realize it."

DRESS GINGHAMS.

For the spring trade of 1900 dress gingham are assured a prominent position. The wholesale houses have now received complete samples, and the past several weeks have been before the retail trade soliciting orders. It is stated that orders to date are fully 30 per cent. in advance of those taken in the same period last year. This applies to both staple and fancy gingham. Of the latter woven stripes are the pattern most in demand, but the large range of checks which has been shown the trade this year by Canadian manufacturers has met with considerable favor. This strong demand has naturally resulted in firm values. During the past six weeks we have announced advances in price ranging in different lines from five to ten per cent. At present the feeling is that prices will be firm for some time. The situation in the United States is equally strong and is described as follows by a prominent New York authority: "Staple gingham in leading makes are heavily under contract, the entire output of some prominent mills being covered by orders for several months to come. There is a steady demand, and prices are very firm. Fine gingham for spring have sold unusually well and in such lines as the Toile du Nord and A.F.C.'s a record business has been done. Dark dress gingham and dark domet fabrics are scarce in all but the lowest qualities, of which there are in an occasional quarter some stocks on hand."

PROPOSED WOOLEN COMBINATION.

Reports have been current the past week as to the probable amalgamation of large woolen interests. It has been stated that the amalgamation will centre around the Penman Company, and include the most prominent mills in Ontario. While there is apparently some truth in the reports that have been published they have been greatly exaggerated. We learn that the movement has not advanced beyond the stage of an informal talk on the part of some woolen mill owners as to the advantages that would be gained by a centralization of mills under one organization. The difficulties in the way of a combination of woolen interests are from all appearances unsurmountable. The small mills of Ontario have a comparatively large aggregate output, and any syndicate of mill owners would meet with strong competition in the production of goods.

MARITIME PROVINCE SHIPPING.

What appears to be a very unusual activity in demand for the purchase of schooners and other sailing vessels by merchants of the French islands, St. Pierre and Miquelon, is reported from Halifax. About thirty vessels have been recently purchased by Halifax men for St. Pierre firms. During last week several Frenchmen have reached that city looking for vessels, which are now somewhat difficult to obtain. Every year the Frenchmen augment their fleet for the fishing banks. Vessels do not last long once they pass into the St. Pierre trade. Consequently, when the fisheries are good, as they are this year, the demand for tonnage is also brisk. Agents from St. Pierre are going to Boston and Gloucester to secure other vessels there.

The St. John Telegraph of Monday says business in square-rigged sail tonnage has been exceedingly light, which is still largely attributed to the unusually small number of vessels available and the enhanced ideas of owners. "In no branch, however, do the orders appear of an urgent character, hence the little inclination shown to anticipate requirements. West India and coastwise lumber vessels have the advantage as to rates, with business still hampered by the shortage of suitable carriers."

On Thursday, Sept. 21st, a new schooner was launched at Bridgetown, N.S., for L. D. Shaffner. This is said to be the first vessel to leave the stocks at that place in nine years.

HOG PRODUCTS ACTIVE.

The hog packing season of 1899-1900 will be opened next week, and the commencement is made under most favorable auspices. A number of prominent houses in the city report that when the new pack is ready for the market they will not have a pound of last year's products on hand. Several causes have contributed to this end. The general demand from the country has shown a betterment, while a revival of the lumber industry and the commencement of a fresh period of activity in railway construction have led to liberal orders being placed for pork products. It is understood that several large shipments are soon to be made to Western Ontario and Manitoba points. Quotations of stock are however, practically where they were some weeks ago, and shippers of dressed hogs cannot look for the season to open with high prices. The situation in the United States has been very quiet for some time past, while the Liverpool market has shown only very moderate strength.

THE HALIFAX FAIR.

After much preparation, the grounds and buildings for the September Fair in Halifax were got ready, and the exhibits were in position by Saturday last, the opening day. The lieutenant-governor opened the Fair officially on Monday amid a good attendance of dignitaries, civil and military. In the matter of cattle and horses there was an unusually good display, and a marked improvement in quality was observable; the poultry show, too, proved attractive, while the display of fruits is striking and valuable.

In the main building, the C.P.R. exhibit of Northwest products is striking, and the products of the Dominion Coal Company are displayed to good advantage. Henderson & Potts have a pyramid of their paints on view. W. & C. Silver show their carpets and curtains in a furnished room. The N. S. Steel Co. have an exhibit of ores, fuels, fluxes, pig iron and the manufactured product. There is an exhibit of Nova Scotia gold quartz, and an exhibit of ores and products of the Minerals Product Co., Bridgeville.

In Machinery Hall the Robb, Engineering Company, of Amherst, N.S., show hot-water heaters and automatic engines of their own make. Parties or firms in Summerside, Smith's Falls and Toronto make displays of farm implements. In the Transportation Building is a remarkable display of vehicles. The Nova Scotia Carriage Co. of Kentville, and the McLaughlin Carriage Co., have the largest exhibit in this department. The former company have sixteen carriages of all descriptions and six sleighs. The McLaughlin Co.'s exhibit consists of seventeen wagons and seven sleighs; these include concords, phaetons and buggies and single and double sleighs. The well known products of the J. B. Armstrong Company of Guelph in the way of carriages and carriage parts are well illustrated at the left of the entrance.

A number of handsome musical instruments, which had already attracted attention at the Toronto Industrial Fair, were on view in the gallery. Among them being Bell organs and pianos, Newcombe pianos, Karm organs, Heintzman pianos. The display made by the Halifax confectionery firm of Moir, Son & Co., is very striking, while Starr & Sons electrical exhibition is one of the features of the place. A. & W. McKinlay make a creditable showing of books and stationery. The Pure Gold goods are among the baking powder and essence exhibits. In the Fishery Department the display of George E. Boak & Co., receives merited attention.

THE WESTERN ASSURANCE COMPANY OPENS IN ENGLAND.

Some months ago, while on a visit to England, J. J. Kenny, vice-president and managing director of the Western Assurance Company, made arrangements to open a branch office for the transaction of fire insurance, the Western having already an office for marine insurance in the Old Country, Mr. W. B.