

train our young men that they may be well equipped for that work."

R. E. Cochrane & Co., New York, have received a letter from J. H. Hale, one of the largest fruit growers in Georgia, in relation to the damage done by the recent cold snap. Mr. Hale says: "News from Georgia is not of the best. On Sunday, the 5th, and for two days thereafter, the temperature was 80 degrees. Japan plums were in bloom and peaches had begun to show the pink of the swelling buds; but there was a drop in the temperature to 20 degrees the next day and it grew steadily colder until on Monday morning of this week, when it touched zero, and it has only returned to 25 degrees to-day. This severe freeze has killed all the fruit buds and several inches of the tipwood growth. Just how serious this latter injury is we cannot say until we have had a week of warm weather."

IN THE DRY GOODS STORE.

The value of local velveteen cord and fustian shipments to the United States from the Manchester Consular district last year was \$1,176,000. In 1897 the value was nearly \$3,000,000.

Parisian hats for the coming spring are all directoire and empire, or between the two, with a little of the 1830 style thrown in. They have high crowns and passes in straw, with a bunch of flowers in the centre.

The cotton velvet and cord trade of Manchester, so far as the States are concerned, has slowly improved. There was a great rush for the goods in the early part of 1897, but last year the enquiry fell away considerably.

A letter from a large London silk house, under date 11th instant, announces an advance in silks of 12½ per cent., with a prospect of an increase to 20 per cent., and if the new crop turns out poorly, even a greater increase.

Many lace bodices are seen with basques and tuniques entirely of lace. The spring promises many of these, says "Jeanne," writing from Paris. She adds that dress sleeves grow tighter and tighter, and a slight appearance of height is given to the shoulders by means of a small trimming below the arm or on the shoulder.

A correspondent tells an English journal with reference to the linen thread trade that the amalgamation has now been practically completed. It includes Messrs. William Barbour and Sons, Ltd., Messrs. Finlayson, Bousfield, and Co., and Messrs W. and J. Knox. The management is composed of members of the Coats, Finlayson and Barbour firms, only one of the latter being, it is understood, represented.

Letters from the Northwest and Northern Ontario complain, says our Montreal correspondent, that the late long continued spell of severe weather had quite a noticeable effect on business, farmers being indisposed to stir out and do any trading while the cold lasted, and this is made the excuse for any little delinquency in payments on the part of country traders; but collections as a whole may be called good.

The tweed trade in the South of Scotland continues in a most unsatisfactory state. While the demand for worsted goods is on the increase, the regular makes are not increasing in public favor. Although wool has advanced in price materially during the past year there has been no corresponding increase in the price of cloth. Satisfactory reports come, however, from Kirkcaldy, all the industries of that busy Scotch town being actively engaged. There is a strong demand for floorcloths and linoleums. The negotiations in connection with the proposed linoleum amalgamation have not yet been concluded.

A Glasgow correspondent states that a report has been current there this week that an arrangement had been completed between J. and P. Coats, Ltd., the English Sewing Thread Company, and the American Thread Company to raise certain counts of threads. However, this arrangement would not affect local prices or those in England, but refers to a general grading of American market values. The American Company had formerly had one price list, but the arrangement come to is to grade the prices of the counts produced at the American mills. The agreement, nevertheless, tends in the direction of higher prices following on this side.—Draper's Record.

INSURANCE ITEMS.

Later advices about the fire at Digby, Nova Scotia, have placed the loss at \$100,000 to \$120,000. But we have seen a letter from Halifax which says that instead of 35 buildings burned, with a loss as above stated, the number of buildings destroyed is 22, and the total loss will not probably exceed \$75,000 to \$80,000, with insurance of from one-fourth to one-third. None of the public buildings were burned except the postoffice. The churches, school, electric light station and most of the residences escaped the flames. The town council and the citizens are conferring as to the wise policy of reconstructing the business part of the town with more regard to fire exposure.

We learned yesterday that Mr. R. H. Matson has decided to sever his connection with the Provident Savings Life Company, that his resignation has been offered and that he will retire from the Canadian management of the Provident next month. Mr. Matson, we are told, severs his business relations with this company on the most friendly terms, and we can hardly wonder at this, for he has done good work here for that company. It is almost ten years since Mr. Matson brought the Provident Savings Society to Canada. It commenced business on the 1st of April, 1889, and on the 31st of December, 1898, the company had \$4,150,142. of insurance in force, and its premium income for the year 1898 was \$117,176.74. This is a very good showing and reflects credit on Mr. Matson and his assistant manager, Mr. Sparling. We have heard Mr. Matson's name mentioned in connection with the management of a new Canadian company, which is to do life insurance business.

—According to its half-yearly statement, up to close of 1898, the Bank of British Columbia has earned fairly well during that period. After paying all charges and deducting rebate of interest on bills not due, the balance at the credit of profit and loss account at that date was £18,735. The appropriation is this, £15,000 in payment of dividend at 5 per cent. per annum, and £3,785 to be carried forward.

—We learn that the issue of bonds by the city of Vancouver to the amount of \$100,000, being 40 year 3½ per cent. securities, for the extension of the waterworks, have been awarded to the Bank of British North America, whose tender was higher than that of the Central Canada Loan Company. The bank offered 96.50 and the loan company 95.11.

—Word comes from Montreal that Mr. Charles R. Hosmer, manager of Canadian Pacific Telegraphs, has been appointed a director of the Merchants Bank of Canada, to replace Mr. T. Drnn, of Quebec.

—A branch of the Quebec Bank has been opened at the village of St. George, Beauce county, Que., under the management of Mr. L. deG. Garand.

—We learn that a branch of the Bank of Hamilton has been within a few days past opened at Vancouver, under the charge of Mr. W. Farrell of that city.

—The statement of Canadian banks for January will be found on pages 1132 and 1133 of to-day's issue.

CLEARING-HOUSE FIGURES.

The following are the figures of Canadian clearing houses for the week ended with Thursday, Feb. 23rd, 1899, compared with those of the previous week

CLEARINGS.	Feb. 23rd, 1899.	Feb. 16th, 1899
Montreal.....	\$17,727,311	\$12,334,932
Toronto	9,652,944	9,599,460
Winnipeg	1,465,819	1,370,940
Halifax	1,017,758	1,151,346
Hamilton	675,909	635,819
St. John	577,171	555,128
	\$81,116,912	\$25,847,690

Aggregate balances, this week, \$4,479,113; last week \$3,489,485.