

Walter Larribbee, in his London circular March 18th, says of tea: China—Public sales comprise 967 half chests black leaf, 649 half chests red leaf, 1,115 boxes new make, and 2,973 boxes scented. Few sales made in the room; best crop Kintucks sold at 7d. and 6 to 6½d.; Corfa, 6½d.; Wingchow, 8d.; new makes considered good value from 4½d. to 6d. At private sale the tone has remained firm, but buying fitful and more restricted. No disposition to listen to lower bids. Ceylons—The auctions comprised 17,815 packages; leaf teas generally sold well, also fine liquoring broken Pekoes, but other grades of broken Pekoes sold flatly. Indian—Total offerings for the week 26,291 packages; sale passed with a quieter tone and prices are inclined to favor buyers.

ABOUT DRY GOODS.

The Kingston cotton mill is now running on full time, operations having been limited for some weeks as a result of tariff uncertainty.

Armure weaves, small fancy effects and napped back goods in foreign dress goods, in plain solid colorings, are prominent in the collections of dress goods lines brought out by American importers for fall.

It is safely predicted that plain taffetas, especially in the more popular shades of cerise, violets, heliotrope, cardinals and bright greens, will shortly be scarcer than changeables. Large quantities of these are being employed as foundations for grenadines and other open-work dress fabrics.

Grass-linen ribbons, says the *Economist*, are a mixture of silk and linen in transparent weave. These goods are about the most summery looking articles, being light and airy, and the ground having that ecru color which is peculiar to linen fabrics. Grass-linen ribbons are seen in all sorts of fancy effects and combinations, with colored stripes, plain and fancy, plaid arrangements, raised effects, and the like.

The average quantity of raw silk taken by America in the six years ended with 1894 was 20.36 per cent. of the total yearly visible supply, while Great Britain took only 7.08 per cent., and the continent took the balance. In 1895 America's share of raw silk was 25.55 per cent. of the total, the continent of Europe's 70.34 per cent., and Great Britain's 4.11 per cent. But the general depression in this country in 1896 had its effect in causing a decrease in the quantity of raw silk purchased by the United States, whose share fell to 14.11 per cent. of the total, while Europe's share increased to 80.73 per cent., and England's to 5.16 per cent.

According to the circular of the Irish Flax Supply Association, the month just closed—as compared with the corresponding month in the last five years—shows a decrease in the imports of flax of 6.9 per cent., and in the imports of yarns 24.3 per cent., but in yarn exports there is an increase of 9.6 per cent. In linen piece goods there is a decrease of 9.4 per cent. in the total exports. The United States mark a decrease of 10.1 per cent., Foreign West Indies 46.2 per cent., British North America 28.1 per cent. On the other hand, Australia is increased 8.0 per cent., France 58.6 per cent., Germany 21.3 per cent., and the Republic of Colombia 6.5 per cent. Estimated value of Irish flax crop, 1896—10,844 tons at £38 13s. 4d. per ton—£419,301.

A Manchester letter, dated March 19th, says: "There has been a steady trade passing in the wholesale houses during the week as far as home orders are concerned, but shipments to many important markets have not been large, and the Canadian trade appears to have suffered. There are, however, several important buyers over from the Dominion, and operations with the States are expected to increase very soon, as there will be a large influx of goods in anticipation of the new tariff. Linen batiste for dress goods purposes are selling well for shipment, and there is a fair home demand for woolen dress goods, the designs being good. The foreign dress goods trade has been fairly brisk, and satisfactory orders for staple makes have been received from New York and Toronto."

St. John tailors have petitioned the common council, setting forth in a long document that it has, for some time, been the custom for certain Great Britain tailoring establishments to send out representatives to take measurements and orders of our citizens for clothes, to the great injury of the business of the local tailors; that the local tailors contribute to the civic burdens, and besides must maintain themselves and families, pay their help and other expenses, while the outsiders, instead of spending here the money made out of their customs in St. John, take it elsewhere, thus taking so much out of circulation, without any compensating advantages. The petitioners say the present license fee of \$20 is wholly inadequate to prevent the evils complained of, and ask that it be made \$100.

THE INDUSTRIAL WORLD.

Locomotive construction in Great Britain was unusually brisk the past year, the total product reaching 10,910. This was 2,437 in excess of 1895.

Mr. Wm. Thoburn, Almonte, Ont., has added a number of broad looms to his flannel mill plant recently. The mill has been running overtime to fill orders.

The report that anthracite coal has been discovered on Lake Winnipeg's shores is again revived. Two years ago a company was formed for the purpose of locating the coal beds, but they were not found.

The centenary of the Hoganas Collieries, the oldest coal mines in Sweden, was lately celebrated. The colliery was started on the 2nd February, 1797, since which time 40,000,000 hectolitres of coal have been raised from it.

The consumption of the cotton mills in the Southern States is placed at 530,000 bales to date, against 518,000 bales in 1896, and 453,000 bales in 1895. Northern mills have taken 1,266,235 bales, against 1,260,704 bales last season.

The Perth *Expositor* says: "There are at present over 100 men employed at the car works, and this is about the full number that can work in the shops at one time on the class of work being done. The prospect for a good summer's work is very bright."

A meeting of representatives of the Spanish iron trade has just been held in the Chamber of Commerce at Bilbao for the purpose of considering a proposal to form a syndicate, having for its object the protection and promotion of the Spanish iron industry. The suggestion was well received, and other meetings are to be held to carry out the idea.

During February, Scotch shipbuilders launched 24 vessels of 16,273 tons—ten steamers of 8,630 tons; two sailing vessels of 3,465 tons; four steam yachts of 3,001 tons; five steam fishing vessels of 645 tons; a torpedo boat destroyer of 400 tons; and two barges of 132 tons—as compared with nine vessels of 14,152 tons in January last, and 24 vessels of 39,391 tons in February, 1896.

Someone in the British cycle trade has apparently been making capital out of the name "Bessemer," as several English cycling papers contain this announcement: "Sir Henry Bessemer desires it to be generally known that he has not made any improvements in the design or construction of bicycles, nor has he ever been in any way connected with any person or persons, company or firm, who make or sell bicycles."

The Pembroke *Observer* thinks the land of the Ottawa Valley well suited to the cultivation of sugar beets, and concludes an editorial under the caption "Shall we have a Sugar Factory" with these words: "Nature has done everything for us. Are our people equal to the task of sharing or leading in taking this tide or opportunity at its flood? A year or two can be saved if the farmers will begin this spring experimenting with sugar beet culture. Until factories are built the crop cannot be made into sugar, but need not go to waste. These beets are superior to any other root crops for stock food, especially for hogs."

Messrs. James Watson & Co., Glasgow, in their circular dated 19th March, say: "The pig iron market has been very flat this week until to-day, when prices rallied about sixpence per ton from the lowest points. Holders have sold pretty freely since it became apparent that a crisis in the engineering trade was probable, and the failure to arrange a conference between masters and men must be regretted. With such disturbing influences around, fresh business is still absent, but consumption continues on a large scale, and the public stores are being considerably drawn upon. At Eglinton works three furnaces have been changed from ordinary to hematite, so that there are now 40 furnaces producing this quality in Scotland."

INSURANCE MATTERS.

The Alliance and the Atlas Assurance Companies have each issued their annual statements and both appear to have had a year of prosperity. When we see a complete report of their annual meetings we shall be pleased to make a more extended reference to the position of these companies.

Replying to "Fire Watcher" we would say that the figures of the February fire loss in the States and Canada were crowded out of the columns of our early March numbers. It may be worth while to give them now. The total for February last was \$8,676,750, as compared with \$9,730,100 for the same month of 1896. The fire loss for 1897, so far, was nearly the same for the two months as for the same two months of last year.

"Where are you going, my pretty maid?"

"To insure my life, kind sir," she said.

"May I advise you, my pretty maid?"

"You may if you like, kind sir," she said.

"Then try the assessment plan," said he.

"I want to invest, not bet," said she.

—Weekly Statement.