

The steamer "Omrah" is carrying 2,332 tons of butter from Australia to London. This is the largest shipment of butter yet sent from the Antipodes.

Australian and New Zealand butter trade with Britain was up to the average for the holiday season. The current prices were 104s. to 106s. for choicest.

The latest instance of American ingenuity may be found, we learn, in connection with the rope trade. Large quantities of disused rope are being bought up by firms in the United States and shipped from England to America, where they are made into paper for use as an insulating material in the manufacture of telegraph and other wires for electrical purposes.

DIARIES AND CALENDARS.

The Atlas Assurance Company, fire and life, established in the reign of George III., sends us one of its always welcome portfolios, which are very convenient for a writer. Mr. Hinshaw, the branch manager, has the editor's thanks for the same.

"Total Assets, \$72,560,330—Canadian Investments, \$6,567,079." These proud figures appear at the top of the calendar for 1900 just issued by the North British and Mercantile Insurance Company. The Scottish lion rampant is very much in evidence on the pictorial portion of the calendar, so is Edinburgh castle and so is St. Paul's Cathedral. The lithographic work is well done by Rolph, Smith & Co., who have confined themselves to one color, true blue; perceiving doubtless that this best fitted the staunch and conservative N.B. & M.

Among the calendars sent us for 1900 is one from Kenny & Co., wholesale dry goods merchants, Halifax. It is mounted on cardboard, and intended to be hung on or over one's desk, easy of access, and entitled "The Daily Reminder." Of it the issuers say: "Its especial use is to remind one of things to be done each day, thus filling the place of an office diary. All the leaves but the last on left side should be folded back to the right, and one leaf turned over every two weeks thereafter. At the end of the year the "Reminder" should be preserved as a valuable record of the engagements of the year. Business-men find the meetings to attend, the appointments made, the notes to be paid, the rents to be collected, all brought fresh to the mind. Lawyers have notice of the papers to serve, collections to make, causes to try, and other matters needing prompt attention. Manufacturers and merchants should note the day on which work is to be finished or goods to be received, etc. At home, too, there are countless things to be done some other day—calls to return, invitations to answer, bills to pay, errands to do. They should all be noted on their proper day, and the mind relieved of the useless burden of remembering them until the proper time arrives."

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

CURRENT HISTORY.—We notice with pleasure another issue of this valuable summary of the world's history, edited by Alfred S. Johnson, Ph.D.; illustrated with maps and portraits; thoroughly indexed; 256 pp.; \$1.50 a year; single number 40 cents; sample complete number, 25 cents; circulars and specimens pages free. Boston: Current History Co., 14 Beacon street.

The Grievances of British Subjects in the Transvaal—Speech on the Address to the Throne by Mr. Drage, M.P., House of Commons, 17th October, 1899. Published by the Imperial South African Association, whose president is Lord Windsor. Some extracts elsewhere from this instructive pamphlet will be found in this issue.

WHAT TO DO WITH HIGHWAY ROBBERS.

United States papers of last week contain opinions of heads of police departments as to what should be done with highway robbers. These are summarized below, and the average man will agree with them: William A. Pinkerton, the detective, advocates the lash for these. He says: "Give each hold-up man caught a hundred lashes and do away with the light punishment now meted out. The housebreaker should be treated the same as a murderer, for, if surprised when he is seeking to rob, it's ten to one he will shoot, and, in many instances, murder will

result." The heads of the police departments in the following cities agree with Pinkerton: John J. Donahue, Omaha; Inspector Watts, Boston; Superintendent Quigley, Indianapolis; John Hayes, Kansas City; John Campbell, St. Louis.

The parson in Hartford, Conn., who advocates the whipping post for drunkards, however, does not discriminate, as a man in his position should do. There are many drunkards who inherit from drunken parents their unfortunate tendency. Others, born with weak wills, or inheriting what the doctors call a nervous diathesis, who give way to drink because it supplies a stimulus their systems crave for, are more to be pitied than blamed, and should be put into asylums rather than tied to the whipping post.

ANSWERS TO ENQUIRIES.

A. W. B., Hamilton.—(1) The company in question is not an assessment company. (2) It has never been an assessment company. (3) We think its assets are proportionately as large as all but two or three of the companies named.

CENSOR, Port Hope.—Your views are absurdly radical, and, indeed, impracticable, as far as experience teaches. You can as soon make water run up-hill as compel all people to think alike or even act alike in municipal or other matters. We can be of no assistance to you.

—The accountant of La Banque Ville Marie, has been condemned to serve three years in the penitentiary for fraud. In pronouncing judgment upon the case, His Honor Mr. Justice Wurtelle remarked upon the conduct of the accused, that instead of trying to straighten out the tangled affairs of the bank, he increased them by prevarication. The judge said: "The result is certainly very sad, as the poor people will lose over one million dollars of their earnings. And who are they who lose these amounts? They are for the most part some of your compatriots, who had confidence in you, in the name of your bank, and deposited their money there. You and Weir are equally guilty. You are young, Weir is very old, almost on the doorstep of eternity. On the report of a physician, that sending him to the penitentiary would mean his death, I condemned him to two years, less one day, in the common jail. You have been recommended to the clemency of the Court by the jury, and I will take their recommendation under consideration in pronouncing sentence. I will give you the same punishment as I gave to Weir, with a slight variance. And it will depend on you to shorten it. Taking into consideration your age, and your healthy condition, in comparison to that of Weir, I condemn you to three years in the penitentiary at St. Vincent de Paul, where, with good conduct, you can lessen your stay by a year, making your term of detention almost the same as that of Weir's."

—The law requiring the registration of all partnerships within six months is being evaded in many cases, and an effort will be made to enforce it more strictly. A test case has been entered against Towns & Co., general merchants of Aurora, by J. R. Ingram, and if it is successful a number of writs of like kind will be issued. The penalty for non-compliance with the law is \$100 in such cases.

CLEARING HOUSE FIGURES.

The following are the figures of Canadian clearing houses for the week ended with Thursday, Jan. 4th, 1900, compared with those of the previous week:

CLEARINGS.	Jan. 4, 1900.	Dec. 28, 1899.
Montreal.....	\$10,424,760	\$13,750,641
Toronto.....	11,692,681	9,120,990
Winnipeg	2,907,812	2,365,829
Halifax	1,755,615	1,448,652
Hamilton	946,229	709,894
St. John	693,223	600,925
Vancouver	746,770
Victoria	541,234
	\$	\$29,284,935
Aggregate balances, this week, \$.....; last week, \$4,003,259.		