

mediums, 28 to 35c for high grades; Indians and Ceylons, 18 to 22c for mediums, and 80 to 45c for high grades.

Fruits—Valencia raisins are quiet and unchanged. We quote good fruit as before. Off-stalk, 4 to 4½c; fine off-stalk, 4½ to 5c; selected, 5½ to 6c; layers, 6 to 6½c. We quote California loose muscatels at 5½ to 6½c. Malaga raisins are dull and nominally unchanged. We quote: London layers, \$2 to \$2.25; black baskets, \$2.90 to \$3; blue baskets, \$4 to \$4.75, extra dessert clusters, \$1; connoisseur clusters, \$2.65 to \$2.90; quarter flat connoisseur clusters, 90c to \$1.15; Royal Buckingham, \$1.50 to \$5. Sultana raisins were cabled 9d. higher on Monday, making an advance of 2s, 3d. from the bottom. Local houses have advanced prices about ½c.; ordinary quotations now being 6 to 7½c per lb. The higher prices in the outside markets are principally in the lower grades of fruit. Demand for prunes is still light. We quote Sphinx as follows: "U," \$1.10 to \$1.15 per half kilo, 5 to 5½c per lb.; "C," 85 to 90c per half kilo, 6½c lb.; "B," 80 to 85c per half kilo, 7 to 7½c per lb. "Atlas," "D," \$1.10 to \$1.15 per half kilo, 4½ to 5c per lb. For Bordeaux prunes, 4 to 4½c is the idea. Currents continue to advance. The cable announced another jump of 1s. 6d. on Monday, making the total gain during the last six weeks 3s. No change has yet been made on the local market, but higher prices may be looked for when present stocks are exhausted. We quote: Filiatras, half-barrels, 4 to 4½c, barrels, 4½c; fine filiатras, half barrels, 4½c, barrels, 4½c; Patras, 5½c in cases; Casalinas, 5½ to 6c; Vostizzas, 6½ to 7c in cases and half cases; Panartes, 8 to 8½c. Figs continue dull at nominally unchanged prices. We quote: 14 oz., 8 to 9c; 10 lb 8 to 10c; 13 lb, 12c; 28 lb, 15c; tups, 4½ to 4¾c; naturals, 6 to 7c.

SALT.—Large lots are freely moving in view of anticipated rise in price to be brought about by the producers. We quote: Barrels, 90c; coarse sacks, 56c; fine sacks, 60c; dairy, \$1.50; rock, \$9.—Canadian Grocer, Feb. 1.

The Evolution of Store Trade.

The idea of a large store, which under the same general name shall include separate departments covering special lines of goods, is not a new one. The public have long been familiar with such departments in many of our larger retail enterprises; such, for example, as those where china and glassware in their various forms are sold. The present novelty which has recently attracted a good deal of public attention lies in the fact that groceries are to be added to the list. Recently announcements have been made that grocery departments have been established in several old houses doing a large and miscellaneous trade. We are now told that other firms, supposedly dry goods merchants, are to keep groceries, and that other department stores soon to be established in this city will devote a large part of their space to the same line of trade. From all the large cities come reports of the spread of the same idea. Undoubtedly all over the United States grocery keepers must face a new competition, with which dealers in china and other wares have long been familiar.

Naturally enough the retail grocers, being the ones whose business is the latest to be injured by the movement, are indignant; yet it is not easy to see how they are to avoid the new competition. If, years ago, traders devoted themselves to this or that line of goods exclusively, it was simply because it seemed to them best. There is no rule of commerce or of equity under which a dry-goods dealer should not sell tops or a toy-dealer sell dry goods; it is

simply a question of profit. The claim, therefore, of the American Grocer that the department stores have a legal but not a moral right to sell groceries is clearly untenable. Alike in small matters and in great, the majority of our commercial problems do not concern morality or equity directly, at all.

Everyone who has been watching the evolution of commerce and trade is aware that the progress of recent years has been brought about by the carrying or manufacturing or selling of large quantities of goods at a small ratio of profit per ton, per pound, or per box; and it would be strange indeed if the same principle should not in some way be applied to retail trade. Just as in large manufacturing industries the proportional expenses of production are reduced by being spread over a large output, so can retail business be more cheaply carried on by concentrating a large number of transactions under the same management. It is useless to complain that a store sells goods too cheaply, or to aver that shoppers should pay more for their purchases in order to allow a small trader to live. Such a policy if practically carried out would stop progress. Nor is it always correct to say that by this process the small trader is deprived of a livelihood. In many cases, and perhaps in most, he may accept service under the large firm and receive steadily the same amount which he before tried to earn precariously as an independent shopkeeper. Cheapness, if not accompanied by a deterioration in quality, is the one thing for which the whole shopping community is in search. —N. Y. Evening Post.

United States Production of Gold in 1894.

The Wells, Fargo & Co. Express advance statement of production of gold in the United States covering the Pacific coast states and territories reckons silver as worth an average of 69c. per ounce, copper 10c. per pound and lead \$3.11 per 100 pounds. The table covers fully 95 per cent. of the entire gold and silver output of the country:

	Percentage.	Value.
Gold	49.66	\$45,892,668
Silver	27.83	28,721,014
Copper	21.19	22,276,294
Lead	7.82	8,223,518

* Totals..... 100.00 \$105,118,489

The gold product of these states and territories shows an increase of \$11,790,000 compared with 1893. The gold production for 1894 was the largest in a quarter of a century, the nearest approach to these figures being in 1877, when the amount was \$44,890,223. The smallest yield was \$25,183,567, in 1884. The value of silver produced showed a decrease of \$9,771,500 from 1893, largely owing to the lower valuation per ounce. In 1893 it was figured at 74c per ounce. Taking the precious metals together, Montana was the largest producer in 1894, followed by Colorado, California, Idaho, Utah, Arizona, Nevada, the Dakotas, New Mexico, Oregon, Alaska, Washington, Texas, British Columbia and Wyoming.

* The province of British Columbia, Canada, is included in the totals.

The Commercial has been favored with a copy of the beautiful catalogue of The Steele, Briggs, Marcon Seed Co. of Toronto. This is the best known seed house in Canada. The catalogue will be found a most useful work for amateur and professional gardeners. It gives a list of about every known plant, flower, shrub or seed that can be grown in this country, in or out doors, with useful hints on cultivation. This firm is particularly noted for the choice quality of its seeds,

Heavy Decline in Wire.

During the week the smooth wire manufacturers held a meeting. The result of which was a radical change in the price of these staple kinds of wire. The change was sudden and in a sense unexpected, as the makers decided upon a new list only a month ago. American competition has been so keen, however, that they were compelled to lower prices. The reduced list goes into effect after the 1st of February, and the lines chiefly affected are annealed, oiled and annealed and galvanized wire, the decline in some cases being over 10 per cent. and in others under. The trade discount off the list has also been increased from 20 per cent. to 25 per cent.

In annealed wire only three numbers are changed, viz, Nos. 13, 14 and 15, the first being marked down 10 cents and the two latter 25c from the list price issued January 1st. In oiled and annealed wire Nos. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 are all reduced, the three first 20c each, and the three last 25c, 85c and 15c respectively. In galvanized wire all the lower numbers have been marked down, the reductions being of a very substantial character as the following table will show:

Number,	New List.	Jan. 1, '95.	Reduction.
7.....	\$3 00	\$3 25	25c
8.....	3 00	3 85	85c
9.....	2 85	3 50	65c
10.....	3 20	3 60	40c
11.....	3 20	3 65	45c
12.....	3 20	3 75	55c
13.....	3 50	3 90	40c
14.....	3 60	4 20	60c
15.....	3 75	4 80	1 15

—Montreal Gazette.

Postal Insurance.

Congressman Hayes, of Iowa, proposes that the United States Congress establish a system of postal insurance by which the government will insure letters and their contents and merchandise sent through the mail. This he would substitute for the registry system which now prevails. The latter is good as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. The United States agrees to be a little more careful with a registered letter or parcel than it does if mailed in the ordinary manner, but it does not guarantee its delivery. If it is lost the government will investigate the matter and probably inform you how and where it was lost, but there is very little satisfaction in this. If the losses in the registered mail are many, then the insurance of letters is necessary, if they are few, then the amount that the government has to make good will be very small, and there is every reason why it should assume responsibility. With its magnificent system of tracking missing letters it can prevent any considerable losses and keep track of letters, etc. This is the view that Mr. Hayes takes of the matter, and he proposes a system of postal insurance up to \$100, the fee being from 10 to 40 cents, according to the amount insured.

Electricity and Steam.

Electrical engineering has advanced far enough to demonstrate the superior economy as applied to short railways, of the electric method of propulsion. That is to say, it has been found cheaper to have one or two central reservoirs of steam power, directly converted into electricity, and through that into motion, than to have fifty separate engines converting their own steam into motion. It does not, of course follow that the future application of electrical mechanism to railroads must all be on this line,