

Correspondence.

DIRECT TRADE WITH AUSTRALIA.

Editor MONETARY TIMES:

DEAR SIR,—I give you as an item of news in connection with what business may be done with our sister colony, Australia, that I have lately made an importation of some goods, which comprise about all that can be used in the leather trade in this country.

Raw kangaroo skins.
Raw wallaby skins.
Merino sheep skins.
Sample lot of bear skins.
New Zealand pickled sheep pelts.
Sydney and Queensland salted hides.
Australian tanned sole leather.

I think this is the first direct importation of this kind from Australia into Canada, and I may add the goods were all bought from first hands, and were brought out by the S.S. "Warrimoo" on a through bill of lading from Sydney, arriving at Vancouver on the 11th ult. and in Montreal on the 22nd ditto.

Through rate of freight in car-load lots was \$1.30 per 100 lbs., which, however, I understand is about 25 per cent. more than the Canadian Pacific Railway has actually carried goods for.

Yours very truly,
J. H. WARDLOW.
Montreal, 1st October, 1894.

CAMP LIFE IN THE MINES.

Those who have never had to "rough it" far abroad, deprived for long terms of the usual surroundings of civilized life, scant of food, with only one mail in a month, have little idea of the sort of life persons are compelled to lead when they go to far countries as surveyors, engineers, miners. A brief description of the daily routine of a pair of Canadians who have for half a year or more been buried alive in the interior of Mexico, some hundreds of miles from the Gulf of California, now buoyed up with hope of a small fortune, now cast down by the desertion of their men or the failure of their rude machinery or the miscarriage of their supplies, may prove interesting. These two mining engineers, according to their letters, have not seen a white face except their own for four months, being surrounded, if they have companions at all, by faithless "greasers"; and they live as cheerily as they may their lonesome lives, plodding away in the endeavor to demonstrate what they, or some one before them, had predicted about the possible yield in gold of a certain location. Here are some extracts from the letter of one to relatives in Ontario, replying to a letter which had been six weeks on the way:

"San Marco's Ranch, Soyopa,
Mexico, August 27th.

"I think I have the date right, and that to-day is Monday. We have a note made that we arrived at this particular spot on the 1st August, Wednesday, and a slight calculation produces the desired result.

"To-day is rainy, and we have not started work yet. We should call it Sunday. Our arrestra worked one day and broke. The centre post was not strong enough, and we have only just got it nearly repaired. Fixing required a piece of timber 18 feet long, and we don't find them so easily. Finally we got a sycamore about two miles and a half from here, trimmed it up and snaked it home in two days. Lott and I are entirely alone, with not even a Mexican within six miles of us. It makes progress very slow to have no men, as I find I am not fit for hard work, though apparently in the best of trim. With a very little work my back plays out. Still I can do a little. I used to think it must be grand sport to fell a tree; now when I have to do it occasionally, I think Gladstone an old fool. We have done very little mine work yet, but every stroke done makes things look better. There is evidently plenty good ore.

"The other day when we were up a canon after our timber it came on to rain heavily, and we had to take to a cave for three hours. Arrived at home the house indicated the heaviest rain yet. Our quarters were just pools of water, the largest being my bed.

"We have amusing things happen occasionally. For instance, after a fortnight, Lott thought he needed a shave, and finally settled down to it with a plate for a mirror. Again Lott had told how coffee should be roasted—slowly. Then he tackled a pound and spent 2½ hours stirring it

over the fire. Next time, however, he did it in twenty minutes. Grub don't improve. Rice and milk have twice varied the monotony of beans and cheese for breakfast, and venison and onions for supper, since I last wrote. Our deer still holds out. [A previous letter had told of the shooting of a deer.] I find I use the term canon promiscuously and ill-advisedly. As a rule they are mere ravines on a large scale, but we have some of the finest box canons. In these, as a rule, one finds sycamore, and it makes a very pretty spot.

"We have an incident. A dog, mauled by a tiger, which they left at the ranch to die, has just crawled up in a dreadful state. Fortunately we have some bread left for him.

"Last Monday I thought San Marcos had its advantages, when I turned out to work in the rain with my dirty pajamas on, but a little went a long way and did not even wash the pajamas. Tuesday, Lott and I washed; Lott all his wash, I only a change. To-day he had the laugh at me, when I had to wash another change.

"The arrestra has been going fairly this week and seems to be doing something, but very slowly. It is badly paved and the drag stones are too small. Yesterday we finished our venison, and to-day tackled canned goods. Tomorrow we go to Soyopa for provisions. Three days successively we have been out after deer and found none. Two men arrived the other day and will remain to work awhile. I rather like their style.
R. R. H."

THE UTILITY AND VALUE OF SOME COMMON MINERALS.

The September issue of the *Canadian Mining Review* contains a paper bearing this title, read before the Ontario Mining Institute at its meeting here last month. We subjoin some extracts:—Five or six years ago a young man came to this city from one of our finished country villages to seek an occupation which might afford larger scope for his energies than the little annex farm at home appeared to promise. He took counsel with one or two friends, and after the merits of a number of projects were discussed, the general conclusion was reached that no business was as sure or safe as one which undertook to supply the common and everyday wants of the people. Food, clothing, and shelter, are necessities of life, and whatever else man in a civilized state may do without, he cannot, or will not, dispense with these. Our young man had been a producer of foods on a small scale, and naturally he inclined to keep on in that line of business. But his heart was set on a specialty, and so he decided to establish a dairy farm and supply the city with milk. He reasoned in this way: "Every family in the city wants milk, and wants it every day. Being a cheap and nutritive food, and, for children especially, an almost complete diet, many people will buy as much as they require, and the poorer classes as much as they can afford. I am therefore sure of customers if I can supply a good, wholesome article, and the cash will come in as the milk goes out." This young man was wise enough to learn his trade in a well managed dairy before starting on his own account; but it was only a matter of a few months, and he began right. To-day he sells in the city the milk of nearly 150 cows, he has one of the cleanest and best equipped dairies in the province, and he is worth \$25,000.

The story illustrates the wisdom of selecting a business that deals with the steady wants of the people, and while intelligence and diligence cannot be dispensed with in any calling, it is worth a good deal to remember that progress is always easiest along the lines of least resistance. Under some circumstances a business runs itself, to use a common phrase; under others it requires a vast expenditure of force and oil, and often then it fails. But many persons are so constituted that they have no pleasure in what are called the meaner pursuits of life. Nothing has a charm for them but to undertake the difficult or the impossible, wherein to succeed is glory and perchance a fortune, and wherein to fail is loss and disappointment without, it may be, a compensating grain of gathered wisdom.

The two most abundant minerals in this country are clay and lime, and they are likewise among the most useful. They furnish the raw material too for mineral industries of the first importance, in which a large amount of capital and many laborers are employed. Yet in the vulgar opinion, clay and lime are not worthy of being called minerals, and the seekers after gold, silver, copper, nickel and iron would

corn to recognize the workers in clay and limes as fellow-miners. I think it will not be hard to show, however, that these very common minerals possess a value not in any degree inferior to the metals, and that they are deserving of much greater attention than they have yet received in this country, at the hands of moneyed men, and men of the best technical training in the mineral industries. But let it be premised that in this paper lime (using the term in its colloquial sense) will be dealt with only as material for the production of cements.

The statistics of the two industries in Canada and the Province of Ontario respectively, are given in the census reports for Canada and Ontario. We select the former:

	Canada.	
	1880.	1890.
Cement—		
No. establishments	9	19
Hands employed	115	243
Wages paid	\$38,151	\$85,960
Value of product	\$91,658	\$251,175
Brick and Tile—		
No. establishments	560	697
Hands employed	4,129	6,737
Wages paid	\$608,690	\$1,428,489
Value of product	\$1,541,892	\$3,584,713

Why, asks Mr. Blue, should we remain dependent on foreign sources of supply for Portland cement? And he replies: "We have in Ontario abundance of raw material for producing it. In scores of localities beds of white shell marl of large extent and excellent quality are found, some of them at the bottom of lakes in which myriads of fresh water shells yet survive, to add to the thickness of the deposit, as one generation follows another; others of them on the sites of lakes long ago filled up with peaty mould, or drained by continual elevations. This marl, if unmixed with sand, clay, peat, or other matter of mineral or vegetable origin, is almost pure carbonate of lime, and furnishes the principal material for the manufacture of Portland cement. The necessary proportion of clay is a matter of experiment, but in all cases the purer and more uniform the quality of the marl, the easier it is to get a rich mixture. Our manufacturers in Ontario have acquired their experience slowly and dearly.

"Mr. Rathbun told me that it cost him five years of testing, with the aid of a chemist, before he was convinced that it would be safe to start his works. Mr. Butchart also told me that it cost his company several thousands of dollars, a visit to some of the best Portland cement works in England—where he was admitted as a special favor—and the services of two experts in the construction of a suitable plant, before they could produce a commercial article. But the Rathbun Company and the Owen Sound Company have succeeded, and during the last two years they have been producing a Portland cement which satisfies every requirement.

"In the strong and fine-textured shales of our Hudson river and Medina formations, conveniently situated and easily quarried, Ontario is favored above most provinces and states in America, and these are valuable for producing brick and terra cotta. The same shales are also found to be suitable for the manufacture of sewer pipe, with proper mixtures, and last year the output of two establishments employed in this industry was \$230,000. Another clay industry is now on the eve of commencement, and if successfully established it promises to be a great boon to our towns and cities, viz., the manufacture of vitrified brick for street paving. In Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, and other American States, this has now grown to be a very important industry."

A HAND-BOOK OF CANADA.

American hand-books on Canada are now to be had everywhere. But for Europe no convenient hand-book was as yet accessible. There were, indeed, elaborate works with great names on the title pages. But of trustworthy, handy volumes, cheap and ubiquitous, there was none. Seeing this void, it was a happy thought of Mr. Karl Baedeker to send a qualified representative of his establishment to all parts of the Dominion to collect materials for a new hand-book for travellers. This representative, Mr. J. F. Muirhead, M.A., was no stranger within our gates, and he knew how to make his way to sources of information that left nothing to be desired. He had served a valuable apprenticeship in preparing the United States "Baedeker," and he has the gift of condensing lucidly. His