

alike for all countries. They have been most successfully applied in this country, and other countries adopting them must needs appear to be copyrighting ours."

#### LEATHER AND ITS PRODUCTS.

The following articles have been placed on the Canadian free list by an order-in-council: Safety bate and tannin preserver when imported by tanners to be used exclusively in the tanning of leathers in their own tanneries; cotton yarn, polished or glossed, when imported by manufacturers of shoe laces.

The Slater Shoe Company of Montreal, has recently had trouble with its employees. Difficulties with the lasters have been arranged and the prospects for a settlement with the cutters are said to be excellent.

Advices from London, March 3, are to the effect that: "At the Mincing Lane sheepskin sales 103,603 Cape of Good Hope and Natal skins were offered, and were of a barely good quality. During the day 86,732 skins were sold. There was moderate competition for short wool and shorn and coarse wooled, which were mostly in request and easily disposed of at an advance of  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. to  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Long wooled declined  $\frac{1}{4}$ d., and a few parcels of extra long Mossel Bay and Western Province sold  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. to  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. lower."

#### EXPORT NOTES.

Several carloads of machinery, including a number of heavy shafts, were recently shipped from Victoria, B.C., by the steamer "Manauense" to Hawaii. A large amount of heavy cargo, including boilers and stacks, had been several weeks awaiting shipment to the islands, and went forward at the same time.

Simplicity in tariff is essential to a successful export trade. and in this respect Canada apparently has the advantage over the United States. The N.Y. Journal and Bulletin of Commerce says: "It is a fact that some manufacturers have removed their plants for the export trade to Canada, where the customs regulations are simpler, and it is believed that many articles might be added to our list of exports were it easy to recover the duties paid on imported materials."

#### THE WORLD'S PIG IRON.

The pig iron production of the world in 1898 is estimated by the Hamburg firm of S. Elkan & Co. in its annual circular at 34,906,000 tons, against a yearly average of 26,750,000 tons for the five years 1891-95. For 1898 the United States leads with 11,506,000 tons, followed by Great Britain with 8,850,000, Germany with 7,400,000, France with 2,250,000 and all other countries with 4,900,000. The average yearly production since 1871, in five-year periods and in 1,000,000 tons, has been as follows:

|                       | 1871-75. | 1881-85. | 1886-90. | 1891-95. | 1898. |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------|
| United States .....   | 2.3      | 4.3      | 7.2      | 8.2      | 11.5  |
| Great Britain .....   | 6.5      | 8.2      | 7.8      | 7.3      | 8.8   |
| Germany .....         | 1.9      | 3.4      | 4.2      | 5.1      | 7.4   |
| France .....          | 1.2      | 1.9      | 1.7      | 2.0      | 2.2   |
| Other countries ..... | 2.1      | 3.8      | 3.3      | 4.0      | 4.9   |
| Totals.....           | 14.1     | 20.7     | 24.2     | 26.7     | 34.9  |

Upon this showing Bradstreets makes the comment that within the last twenty-seven years the world's production of iron has increased by 143 per cent., that of Germany has increased four-fold, and that of the United States five-fold, while the production of Great Britain has increased only 35 per cent.

#### FEDERAL LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY.

The latest report of this company is a satisfactory and encouraging one. There has been an addition of \$143,000 to assets, which are increased to the large sum of \$866,000, and the surplus to policy-holders is now \$108,000, entirely apart from guarantee capital. The directors are right in their conclusion that public feeling continues to grow in favor of investment assurance rather than of other forms; and doubtless

this is the reason that the bulk of the Federal's new business, this year and last, has been on investment plans. The board is manifestly proud of, and the policy-holders have reason to be thankful for, a rate of income on the company's investments considerably higher than the average of companies,

New business written was greater than in the previous year, though the number of policies was not so great; showing probably that through the improvement in general circumstances people are taking out larger policies. Death claims were \$114,575 on 57 lives, and there was \$7,000 reinsured. Total payments of the year to policy-holders amounted to \$143,702. A special act of incorporation has been obtained making the name of the company the Federal Life Assurance Company of Canada, and granting enlarged powers of investment, both in Canada and beyond. The total amount at risk on the Federal's books now exceeds \$11,000,000. We observe that a very desirable addition has been made to the board of directors in the person of T. H. McPherson, M.P.

#### EDMONTON BOARD OF TRADE.

The annual meeting was held in February, Mr. C. Gallagher, president, in the chair, and much important business was transacted. There is a project to form a company to buy and improve the Fair grounds. This will cost \$10,000, and it was stated that \$8,000 is already subscribed towards it. A committee was appointed to memorialize the Government regarding mail service to the Peace and Mackenzie river regions, and the Mining Committee of the board was instructed to take up the question of the geological survey of Great Slave Lake. Furthermore the board finds it very needful to provide accommodation for immigrants in town during at least three months in the coming spring, by renting a building; and if the council will not do so the board will take up a subscription to secure the necessary funds to provide such a building. The Government will presently be memorialized to push on the completion of the bridge over the river. Officers were elected, as follows: President, T. W. Lines; vice-president, J. H. Picard; secretary, Mr. Cowie; to act until the return of F. Fraser Tims, when a permanent appointment will be made; Council, Messrs. Bellamy, Blowey, Gallagher, Johnson, Kinnaird, Kirkpatrick, Strang, McDougall and Walker; Board of Arbitration, the president and members of the council. Standing committees were appointed under the following headings: Agriculture, Immigration, Mining, Public Works and Railways, Finance, Retail Tariff.

#### ANSWERS TO ENQUIRERS.

INSURER, Owen Sound.—The company has not sent us its report, so that we are unable to answer your question. We are told that it denies very strongly any intention of absorbing or being absorbed.

J. B. L., St. Hyacinthe.—A Dominion charter. The headquarters are in Montreal, not Toronto.

#### FOR GROCERS AND PROVISION DEALERS.

The crop of wheat in Uruguay is estimated at 4,500,000 bushels.

Montreal butchers talk of concerted action in raising the price of meat.

Advices from India are that the crop prospects are generally favorable. Rain has fallen in Punjab, the Northwest provinces and Berrar, benefiting the growing grain crop.

The vote on the by-law in the town of Palmerston, Ont., guaranteeing the debentures of the Farmers' Co-operative Pork Packing Company, amounting to \$25,000, was carried on Monday by a large majority.

Something more than talk has come out of the scheme for a co-operative pork packing factory at Brantford. Thousands of dollars have been subscribed by citizens and farmers of the district. Another meeting of those interested will be held to-morrow.