

It is a shrewd idea to have a comprehensive exhibit of British Columbia industries at the fair, especially for the benefit of American visitors. The Minister of the Interior has promised that the Government would be willing to pay for the cost of the erection of a building for these exhibits. Mr. Sifton further said that he would endeavor to arrange with Prof. Dawson, who is now making a collection of British Columbia minerals for the Paris Fair, to send a portion of her collection to the Winnipeg Fair. He also offered to bring the matter before Hon. Mr. Fisher of having a comprehensive exhibit from the experimental farms of Canada sent forward.

### A GOOD OPPORTUNITY.

Some hundreds of ladies and gentlemen gathered on Tuesday last, at the request of the Toronto Guild of Civic Art, to witness the presentation to the city of Mr. George A. Reid's mural decorations of the new city hall. The main features of these paintings, which ornament the spandrels of the arches over the main entrance, and the two panels beyond, are representations of scenes among the pioneers of York, notably, a group of settlers and a surveying party. They are in admirable taste and form a worthy nucleus, from which may spring some further efforts by qualified artists, of whom happily some are among us. Mr. B. E. Walker, who made the presentation to the city in the name of the artist and with the authority of the Guild, made a valuable practical suggestion. He said that while it was too much to expect artists generally to display the generosity Mr. Reid had done in giving these results of months of work gratis to the corporation, the prospect was also remote of the city council giving a sufficient grant to secure similar works by other artists. Therefore, said he, the opportunity offers itself for some of the rich men of the city to give from their abundance sums which will induce Toronto artists to continue a work so well begun, and make the wall decoration of this noble building year by year something like what it should be. Nothing, it was truly said by one of the speakers, could give visiting strangers a better idea of the progress of taste in art among us than the adequate embellishment of our greatest civic structure. In all sincerity we pass the suggestion on to those who have the civic pride—none too plentiful among us—and possess the means, to continue in this direction the decoration of the interior of our city hall. We learn with much pleasure that Mr. William Davies one of our prominent manufacturers, has offered for the acceptance of the city council a large and handsome picture of a scene in New Zealand.

### MANNERS.

A gentleman who had read our article on business handwriting, and noticed the remark quoted of the young man to the effect that poor handwriting "doesn't matter now-a-days," tells us of some other respects in which boys think that certain things "do not matter." And he encloses the following, from a recent issue of Saturday Night: Standing by the desk of a business man who employs quite a number of lads, I saw a boy of about fifteen come in and apply for a situation. The boy was well dressed, and in demeanor and accent indicated that he belonged to one of the upper grades of the Public schools. Without taking off his hat or appearing to notice anybody who was present, he demanded in a sharp, unpleasant voice, "Say, mister, are you advertising for a boy?" The business man looked at him for a second and answered, "I want an older boy than you." "What?" "I want an older boy than you," answered the merchant in a somewhat louder voice. "Oh," answered the lad as he swung around and walked out.

"That," said the merchant to me, "is a sample of the manner of the Toronto schoolboy. In my business, you know, we depend almost entirely upon the politeness, quickness and adaptability of the young fellows we have behind the counter. I have to change my boys a dozen times a year because I cannot get the right material. My customers ask me why I change my boys so often. Certainly it is not to save money, for I would be willing to keep them if they were worth keeping. The first thing they ask me is what wages I pay, and the next, what hours they will have to work. They never think about me

or my business; all they want to know is how much they can get out of me. Apparently they give me no credit for being able to teach them a profitable trade; they only regard me as a taskmaster who is to be made pay the highest price, give the shortest hours, and accept the lowest possible quality of service."

Both the boys and the parents of the boys may be the better of being told that good manners have a certain value. A case comes to mind in which a Canadian boy of twelve obtained employment with a Detroit concern in preference to several American boys, because he had been trained to a quick politeness in speech and action, while the Americans, who were his competitors, had been taught that "it didn't matter," and were too slangily free-and-easy. That boy was promoted every year, and is now the main support of his mother. Let no one run away with the notion that poor handwriting "doesn't matter," that bad manners are of no consequence, that neatness, promptness, truth-telling, a willing disposition, are of no avail in business. Merchant and stock-broker alike are taken with civility; and the man or lad who lacks it lacks an important element in commercial as in other sorts of activity.

### SELLING DIRECT.

Wholesale merchants the world over complain that manufacturer and retailer are coming nearer together. This applies apparently to all branches of trade. The British Timber Trades Journal in a recent issue makes an interesting statement of this tendency of trade. The journal says: We have received a series of letters representing the correspondence which has passed between the representative of a manufacturer of pine doors in Canada and an importer here on the subject of selling to inland merchants. Without mentioning names, we may state that the parties who complain of this mode of procedure are well known importers of Canadian doors on the coast, and their grievance lies in the fact that their customer has put himself in communication with the representative of the firm who makes the doors, and they maintain that the said representative should have declined the correspondence with the inland man. This, it seems, they refused to do, on the plea that the inland man having come to them, might go to some other agent or possibly communicate with Canada direct. After carefully perusing the correspondence, we think the coast importer has placed a rather hasty construction on the action of the manufacturers' agents, who deny having attempted to do business with the customer inland. They were first applied to, so they state, and the fact of them making this known to the importer might be accepted as a proof of good faith. The present tendency is, as everybody knows, for the inland men to become importers on their own account, and the firms at the coast towns are naturally very sensitive on this account. But we can fully understand the hardship experienced by the manufacturers and shippers in being obliged to refuse cash business on a point of etiquette or trade usage. It may not be out of place here to remark that it is a mistaken notion on the part of those who desire to treat direct with the producer that they can thus get goods any cheaper. It is fallacious to suppose that the agent's commission is deducted from the price, for this extra profit is usually appropriated by the shipper. We do not assume that this is the governing motive that brings consumer and producer nearer and nearer together, but it has something to do with it, no doubt. The letters referred to were sent to us for publication, but we do not think any purpose would be served by putting them in print, and probably both parties hereafter will thank us for not doing so.

### FINANCIAL MATTERS.

We understand that the sum of \$40,000 has been paid for a seat on the New York Stock Exchange, and that \$10,000 is the price to-day of a seat on the Montreal Stock Exchange. What must be the prospective profits or revenues of a business that justifies the expenditure of such sums as either of these in order to be licensed to buy and sell shares.

It was announced by M. Paul Kruger, president of the Transvaal Republic, in a speech delivered last month, that the Transvaal is now the largest gold-producing country in the