

The Corn Duties Bill imposing import duties upon grain, flour and feeding stuffs, has passed the British House of Commons by a substantial majority.

A writer in Cassier's Magazine gives an illustrated description of some of the machinery in a new cotton mill in South Carolina, operated by electricity, the motors being attached to the ceiling to avoid occupying floor space.

The motors are absolutely out of reach, afford no danger to human life, and are so proportioned as to give, according to the number installed, the greatest flexibility to the plant as a whole. No special machinery is installed for lighting the plant, as the current is taken from the generator producing the power. Temporary power for any purpose, in any portion of the plant, is easily supplied by a portable motor, which is readily tapped on any power circuit in convenient reach. These and many other advantages, from a mechanical standpoint, have been demonstrated by actual experience. There is a saving in the friction alone of 20 per cent. The producing capacity of the machinery operated is, in actual practise, increased about 4 per cent., due to the steadiness of this method of driving over the usual method of ropes and belts, and the more uniform speed obtained throughout the plant. The enormous flexibility and economic problems solved by the installation of these electric-driven cotton-mills are felt even outside of the mill itself. The plants are readily available for furnishing power to others within reach to the extent of its surplus, and may produce a considerable revenue from this source; and they can supply power at a lower figure than that at which isolated plants could generate their own power.

The Association of American Steel Manufacturers met recently in Pittsburg, when questions of testing and the standardization of specifications for steel were considered. Committees were appointed to carry on the work of further standardizing the various classes of material manufactured by the iron and steel plants of the country, and the details of the standardizing of structural shapes will be further worked out. It was announced that the standards prepared by the American committee of the International Association for testing materials are now being generally adopted by the trade.

It is not improbable that there will shortly be formed a combination of British and European iron masters and workers with a view to keeping up prices. The object of such a combination is to prevent prices being brought to such ruinous depths as they have been until recently, and to enable the European works to compete with the Americans, not only in Europe, but in India, the British Colonies—in fact the world over.

The London, Eng., Daily Express asserts positively that the shipping combine has forced the Canadian Pacific Railroad to boycott the Beaver Line of steamers by the threat that if the Canadian Pacific Railroad failed to comply with the combine's demand no emigrant carried on any ship under the control of the combine would be allowed to travel over the Canadian Pacific road. At a hurried meeting of the directors of the Canadian Pacific, continues The Express, it was decided that it would be useless to fight the combine. As a result of this action the British agents of the Canadian Pacific road now refuse to issue passages on steamers of the Beaver Line.

Hon. Mr. Fielding, Minister of Finance, has introduced a resolution in the House of Commons authorizing the Government to admit free of Customs duty all machinery not made in Canada, and used for the manufacture of rifles, also such parts, in the rough, of the weapons as cannot be manufactured in the Dominion.

Speaking of the Australian tariff, the Sydney correspondent of Commercial Intelligence says that the Commonwealth tariff is becoming more complicated than ever, and is admitted by friends or foes to possess neither sense nor principle. Its inconsistencies, we are told, are manifold and bewildering. Textiles, which include ribbons, are dutiable; but typewriters, including the ribbon in use thereon, are free. Typewriter ribbons, however, when imported distinct from the machine, are held to be dutiable under the "textile" heading. In several instances where the tools used in certain manufacturing industries are declared exempt, many have been declared dutiable under other headings unless specifically mentioned. It is uncertain when the end of the tariff will be reached, but it is certain to meet with even more intense opposition in the Senate, and then, after all, its continued existence will form the burning question at the next Federal elections. Meanwhile, the duties levied under the tariff are bringing in a higher revenue than was anticipated, but this has been partially explained by the fact that the large stocks of duty-free goods in New South Wales are enabling importers to keep down prices of goods imported under the tariff; while in Victoria and other States the reverse operation is in progress. Neither the Federal nor any of the States treasurers anticipate a continuance of the increase; on the contrary, they are looking for a heavy decline during the latter part of the year.

Preparations for the International Exposition to be held in St. Louis, Missouri, next year are being made upon a scale hitherto unknown. The chosen site appropriates about one-half of the 1,300 acres which make Forest Park, with enough adjoining land to cover about 1,000 acres. The plan and scope adopted contemplate the presentation of manufacturing industries in actual conduct as well as of the machinery out of action; the exhibition of processes as well as of completed products. As many novel features as possible will be shown, but nothing will be sacrificed to them. As it has larger capital resources than any previous exhibition, its managers have procured the best and most experienced men available, and are themselves working with much spirit. Work is going forward as rapidly as possible in the formative period of an undertaking of such magnitude. Buildings and sewage systems are under contract, lakes and other landscape features are in course of construction, and branch railways are surveyed. Invitations have been extended to all foreign countries, and many of them—about twelve or fifteen, including France and Japan—have been accepted. Congresses, drawing their delegates from all over the world, are being arranged, and patriotic, religious, and social bodies are preparing to hold conventions or to make exhibits.

The Maritime Merchant calls attention to complaints that Canadian manufacturers of tools and implements have been paying less than the customary attention to the finish of their products. No doubt the difficulty in keeping up with orders is responsible for this, but it seems to be very poor policy and must have an injurious effect on future business, especially at points where there is more or less United States competition. "Attention was called recently to some articles in a store side by side," says The Merchant, "and while the Canadian made article was admittedly the better value, the finish of the United States make was so superior that a purchaser who judged from appearance only would likely favor it in making his selection."

Detinning of tinplate scrap is going to be an important industry in Toronto, several firms being engaged in the business. Formerly tin scrap, old cans, etc., were treated in a crude way which removed part of the solder and some of the tin, but the old iron remaining was not fit for remelting in open-hearth furnaces, owing to the tin still adhering to it. This material was used in making cast sash weights, etc., but the product was of a very poor quality, being very brittle. Improved methods have resulted in removing most of the tin coating from the sheets, the remaining scrap being of a very fine quality of steel or iron and valuable for use in the open-hearth steel process.