

CANADIAN TOBACCO.

The importance of South-western Essex as a tobacco-growing district has forced itself on the attention of tobacco dealers and manufacturers. Some days ago Messrs. J. and B. Goldstein and D. W. Ferguson, of Montreal, visited Kingsville and Leamington, to examine the tobacco crop, with a view to establishing a tobacco manufacturing plant. Mr. Ferguson is an old manufacturer and bought tobacco there many years ago. These gentlemen figure that the output of the counties of Essex and Kent will be between five and six million pounds, and that the price, in consequence, will not be as high as it was last year. Mr. Goldstein said it would have been better for the growers had they planted more cigar tobacco, and suggested that the municipality would engage a man who understood curing cigar stock to instruct the growers on that point. He strongly advises growers to import seed instead of raising it themselves.

They told the Windsor Record that they never saw a better crop of tobacco in Canada than this county is producing this year. They also found that all the different kinds of leaf required are now being raised. In establishing their factory they say they will be guided by the terms offered by the municipalities, which are seeking for them, and hint at bonuses. They propose manufacturing all kinds of tobacco, and would likely go into the cigar trade as soon as the other branches were running properly. Chatham would like to have the factory; its Board of Trade will meet these gentlemen. But Windsor has claims too, as a shipping point.

SCIENCE BREVITIES.

The barbed-wire fences surrounding Santiago, says Electricity, which have proven a hindrance and nuisance to our hard-worked soldiers, have, it seems, after all, their advantages. Not long ago one of the wires of such a fence was sufficiently insulated to allow of telegraphic messages being sent from one army corps to another, a distance of five miles. Thus the Spaniards unwittingly saved the enemy's signal corps the trouble of laying a wire through a rugged country.

RETURN OF AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

Our ancient, trusty, drougthy crony, the Fire Fiend, has returned from his vacation, and is again "in our midst." He has been absent two or three years. In his travels in other climes and spheres, who will doubt that he has had a high old time? After he had been gone from the United States a year and a day, the fire underwriters got it into their heads that, like the lost Pleiad, he would be seen no more.

All the companies made money. The country had ceased to offer burnt offerings and votive gifts to Moloch. Flame and flinders rested from their labors. It really seemed as if the forces which make for safety had got the upper hand of what Insurance calls "fire's destructive energy." Ha!

Who is he that cometh in the path of the lightning and the thunder clad in caloric and charged with a purpose of flame? A blazing nimbus of cut rates encircles his pate. His many-twinkling feet are dancing in the direction of big lines. He cometh from the land of the sun. His course has been from where the moon shines with a good grace. In lands afar he has quenched not the smoking flax, neither plucked any brand from the burning. He has returned to us with new schemes for blazes which he will "give out" for practice in the coming winter.

The Fire Fiend is with us again. He has landed "with both feet."—The Insurance Press.

THE STATE PAYS THE SHOT.

Here is a brief description of how matters go to seed in some countries, if not looked after by energetic and trustworthy heads of departments.

"Some time ago," says a San Paolo Brazil, paper, "a general was sent to one of the northern states to investigate the management of a government railroad. He belonged to the set of men who had made themselves obnoxious by their endeavors in the service of reform, and here are some of his experiences. The very first day he found in one of the rooms of a railroad station a strong young man who was doing nothing. Thinking the young fellow had come to see him, he asked: 'Do you wish anything, my friend?' 'No, sir; I am employed here.' 'So! What are your duties?' 'I have to fill the water jugs in the office every day.' The general was a little astonished. In the next room he discovered another able-bodied young man smoking a cigarette. 'Are you an employee?' he asked. 'Yes, sir. I am the assistant of the gentleman in the next room.' But that was nothing to what was to come. The general had already been informed that the road employed eighteen engineers, while only eight were working. He ordered that in future these men should at least turn about. The next day one of these 'engineers,' a beardless youth, came to him and told him he could not run a locomotive to save his life. 'Then how did you get on the pay-roll?' 'Well, you see, general, it's this way: My family are poor, but I wanted to study law. We've got some pull, so I managed to get an appointment as honorary engineer, to make a living while I pursue my studies.'"

CHICAGO'S COSMOPOLITAN.

The late Chicago school census discloses that the city has a population of 1,851,588, of which 488,683 are Americans, born of American parents. There are:

488,683 Americans, native-born.
248,142 Irish.
490,542 Germans.
111,190 Swedes.
89,208 Bohemians.
84,223 Canadians.
44,223 English.
21,840 French.
23,061 Italians.
45,690 Norwegians.
96,853 Polish.
2,445 Chinese.
22,942 Scotch.
38,987 Russian.

A number of Greeks, Spaniards, Hollanders and other people, and 25,814 negroes. A little calculation shows that more than one-fourth the population of Chicago (26.41 per cent.), is American born; while the German residents form a still higher percentage, viz., 26.51. The Irish are an eighth of the mass (13.41 per cent.), and the Scandinavians, i.e., Norwegians and Swedes, 8.47 per cent. Canadians, Poles and Bohemians compose about five per cent. each of the population, while the English and Scotch together leaven the lump to the extent of 3.66 per cent.

FLAX SEED EXPORT, VIA MONTREAL.

A Montreal paper notes the coming to Montreal this season of quantities of flax seed, grown in the United States. It appears that Mr. A. G. Thomson, grain and freight broker, shipped a lot of 37,500 bushels of flaxseed on the SS. "Scotsman," for Liverpool, and between 200,000 and 300,000 bushels are to follow. This is a new export business, via the St. Lawrence, which it is expected will develop into large proportions, as considerable quantities have hitherto been exported to the Old Country via the

American seaboard. There is a large quantity of American flaxseed to go forward, the new crop being estimated at 16,000,000 bushels, or 5,000,000 bushels more than that of last year, and as there is 2,000,000 bushels of the old crop left over, there is a total of the old and new crop amounting to 18,000,000 bushels, and deducting 1,000,000 bushels for seed, leaves 17,000,000 bushels for home consumption and export. The chances are, therefore, that a larger quantity than usual will be exported, and there is no reason why the St. Lawrence route should not get a fair share of the trade. The value of North-west flaxseed in bond afloat Montreal is about 96½c. to 97c.

MARGIN OF PROFIT NARROWING.

In every department of business the struggle to keep down working expenses grows more and more keen, and more and more hopeless. These expenses grow automatically, and are to a large extent beyond the control of managers and directors. In the case of railway companies this is perhaps more pronounced, and increased traffic receipts have, as we have lately seen, in many instances, been more than absorbed by the growth of the wages bill, and the ever-growing demands of local bodies, not to mention such items as the price of fuel. Banks are not quite so badly off. It is true that every year a given amount of profit is earned with greater difficulty through the combined effect of the downward trend of interest and the upward curve in cost of management; but it is in the matter of the remuneration of the staff that the banks score. There are no such advances in the remuneration of clerical labor in banks and offices as recent years have witnessed in the case of railway employees. When banking men consider themselves underpaid, they grumble; when railway men hold the same opinion they threaten to strike. This is the main cause of the difference.—Bankers' Magazine, London.

LA BANQUE DU PEUPLE CASES.

Some time ago an important question was submitted to Judge Loranger for a judicial opinion in connection with the numerous cases arising out of the Banque du Peuple failure. It will be remembered that in the different actions, which were taken by interested parties after the collapse, the proceedings were instituted against the bank, and the directors jointly and severally. The directors also all pleaded jointly with the exception of Mr. Toussaint Prefontaine, who chose to plead alone. Under those circumstances Mr. Prefontaine wanted to have the Court's opinion as to whether he had the right to plead alone, and, if so, whether the bank could be held responsible for his costs.

On the first point the learned judge held that while the bank and its directors sued jointly, must be considered as working partners, and the shareholders silent partners, each of them had the right to plead and defend himself separately.

As regards the responsibility of the bank for the costs in such a separate plea, the court held that said responsibility could exist only in so far as the interests of the bank itself were concerned in the matter. In the case now submitted, the costs incurred were simply in the interest of Mr. Prefontaine personally, and consequently, the bank could not be held responsible. The amount involved is \$4,160.45, regular costs, and \$2,000, for legal advice and consultations.—Montreal Witness, 16th.

—Whycocomagh has been made a customs and warehousing port under Port Hawkesbury.