

and having a frontage of 132 feet. On the ground is erected a large brick cottage and outhouses. This property was started at \$1,600, and was ultimately knocked down to the purchaser of the previously mentioned plot for \$2,600. The third parcel offered was a lot situated on the west side of Jarvis street, a short distance north of the intersection of Isabella and Jarvis streets, occupied by Mr. Alexander Davidson, having a frontage of 52 feet by a depth of 300 feet. On the lot is erected a white brick cottage, 12 to 15 years old, numbered 476, and outbuildings, and also a building formerly used as a school-room. This property was started at \$1,000, and was rapidly bid up to \$3,100, at which price it was knocked down to Mr. W. Davidson, son of the present occupant. The audience was large and composed chiefly of mercantile men of means and standing. The bidding on all of the parcels was unusually sharp. The aggregate amount realized was \$12,340.

—The foundation for the new Toronto Registry Office in process of erection on Richmond street, just east of Dr. Jennings' Church, is finished. The building will probably be completed by next spring.

—The site for a new Post Office in Toronto has been selected, and the plans are ready.

Commercial.

Oil Matters at Petrolia.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

PETROLIA, Dec. 13, 1869.

There have been two large sales of crude this week; one by Mr. Higgins, to Messrs. Englehart & Co., of 25,000 barrels; the other, the Iron Tank Company's oil, to Parsons & Williams, some 29,000 barrels. The rates got were \$2 per barrel, exclusive of tankage. Several small lots of fresh pumped oil have changed hands during the last 8 days, amounting in all to some 3,000 barrels, at \$1 75 per barrel. Business is brisk, and prices are well maintained. The different process of deodorizing the refined oils makes quite a demand for it here, for it can now compete with the samples sent off for export, and so commands a good price; it sells readily at 23c., against 21c. for our old stinking stuff. I fancy this system of deodorizing will create quite a new era in our oil trade, for refiners can now refuse to sell except at their own prices, for home consumption, knowing that they have a sure market for it all in New York.

The production of the last week has been about 5,000 barrels. The removal of crude and refined from Petrolia to Canadian ports has been at the rate of 24 car loads per day.

I understand that Mr. Vantyle and a Mr. Wallen have both been lucky enough to strike good wells, but as neither have been tested no report can be given. Their wells are situated in a northerly direction from Petrolia.

Crude oil, fresh pumped.....\$1 75 per barrel.
Refined.....23 per gallon.

Supply of Cotton.

The following table shows the quantity of cotton in sight at the latest date of each of the three past seasons:

	1869.	1868.	1867.
Stock in Liverpool..bales	335,000	368,000	431,000
Stock in London.....	98,500	126,700	107,100
Stock in Glasgow.....	300	550	2,900
Stock in Havre.....	83,200	48,700	66,400
Stock in Marseilles.....	8,000	4,300	12,000
Stock in Bremen.....	2,950	7,100	30,000
Stock rest of Continent..	12,000	10,000	271,000
Afloat for Great Britain..	292,000	254,000	271,000
Afloat for Havre.....	78,250	43,990	8,735
Stock in United States ports.....	280,619	239,847	253,164
Stock in inland towns....	61,242	40,991	66,361
Total.....	1,247,061	1,146,178	1,249,300

Petroleum.

Exports of Petroleum from the United States from January 1 to December 4:—

	1869.	1868.
From New York.....galls	62,719,751	50,919,591
Boston.....	2,044,718	2,320,486
Philadelphia.....	29,331,335	36,710,012
Baltimore.....	1,243,133	2,583,021
Portland.....		704,907

Total Export for the U. S. 82,619,186 42,318,426
Same time 1867.....62,662,492
Same time 1866.....62,559,342

The Brandy Trade of Charente.

The following interesting account of the trade of Charente is taken from a description of a visit to the establishment where the "Grande Marque" brandy is prepared, which has appeared in the *Sunday Times* and in the *Wine and Spirit Gazette*. It is, of course, known to the trade that the almost exclusive demand of the public for a few marks is founded on error, for the nine or ten leading firms enjoy no special advantage over the smaller buyers, and there is no particular secret or receipt which makes one brandy superior to another. All buy in the same market, and the quality is simply a matter of the price given and the care taken in blending. We believe that the erroneous impression held before his visit of the writer of the subjoined article, that the great brandy firms are distillers, is also very general among the public:—"The country of Charente is one of the most interesting in France, and one of the richest, owing to its production of a brandy, which, the finest in the world, is distilled from the wine grown in the Cognac district, and represents one of the most important sources of the public wealth of France. England produces iron and coal, America grows cotton, China cultivates tea, other countries yield sugar, coffee, pepper, indigo, &c.; but only the cognac district produces Cognac brandy, a production that is welcomed throughout the whole world, on account of the special qualities it possesses. These qualities all traders of high standing are anxious to preserve in that native purity which has given Cognac such a universal reputation. They reasonably wish to deliver, at home and abroad, the distilled produce of the grapes of the Champagne, the Borderies, or Bois districts, in its unadulterated form, and they regard as a forger any merchant who dares to mix with the brandy of the Charente district spurious spirit, or even spirit made from wine grown out of the area of the Cognac brandy production. Every one must approve this praiseworthy feeling on the part of the Cognac trade. Spirits from any part of the world, whatever may be their origin, are unable to compete with brandy of the Cognac district. The neighborhood of Cognac is the most important part of the country of Charente as regards the transformation of wine into brandy, especially in that part of the country known as the Champagne district of Cognac. The average crop of the Cognac district is not less than 600 gallons per acre, and the surface cultivated being 250,000 acres, it yields a quantity of 150,000,000 gallons which, when distilled, represents 150,000 puncheons of brandy as the yearly average. I must confess that, like most other people on this side of the channel, I thought, up to the very day when I was introduced to the growing country, that the distillation of brandy was performed by the trade, and that large firms were necessarily the holders of large farms. I was, therefore, not a little surprised on learning that the brandy merchants are no more farmers than our English brewers are cultivators of hops and barley. No large farms, indeed, are to be met with in the county of Charente. I was informed, on good authority, that in the Cognac district, where immense fortunes have been made in the brandy trade, there are not five proprietors who hold seventy-five acres of vineyards, not ten landowners possessing forty acres, while holders of twelve acres do not

exceed thirty in number. So that the brandy trade, in which so much is made of brands, differs in this respect from the corn trade, where every farmer brings his load to the market, and many varieties of wheat make up a single cargo of grain, the value of which, as a whole, is according to the proportion of first quality which it contains. Just the same thing happens in Charente, where every peasant-proprietor comes once a week, on market day, to Cognac, with a sample of the brandy he intends to sell. The trade buy in that way an enormous number of small parcels, and firms who hold in stock 500,000 or 600,000 gallons can only accumulate this quantity by purchasing from 4,000 or 5,000 hands. The quality of the brandy sold in our market and elsewhere, depends upon the care taken by the Cognac trade in buying nothing but the produce of Grande Champagne, Petite Champagne, Borderies, or Bois, and upon the skill displayed in the process of blending, the superiority remaining with that description with which the largest proportion of Champagne has been amalgamated. It was certainly a new thing for us to learn that the trade was quite a distinct body from the growers, the latter producing, the former blending and selling; but we were indebted to the kind attention of the manager of La Grande Marque for the pleasure of witnessing the process of blending, which I beg to describe summarily. Brandy in its natural state, that is, as it is bought from the peasants in innumerable parcels of from one to twenty hogsheads, and with a strength of from 10 to 15 over-proof, lies stored in the warehouse I have alluded to. These parcels represent as many qualities as the number of the fields in which they are grown, and although divided by the four divisions of Grande and Petit Champagne, Borderies, and Bois, great care is taken to keep a sample of every parcel, as two Champagne peasants dwelling in the same district may produce brandy of a different character, although equal in price. This explains why the sample room is a catalogue of the store. The great secret of the Cognac trade is the science of blending, for without it, as no two vintages give the same result, it would be impossible to insure a uniformity of supply. It was not without intention that I speak of blending as a science. The liquids of different growths, when vatted, are twice raised by powerful pumps to the top of the building, and then descend slowly through a series of filters, are again elevated, and either poured into casks or directed towards the bottling room, where the operations of bottling, corking, capsuling, labelling, enveloping, packing, branding, and forwarding, occupy less time than I have taken to mention them."

Freights.

The winter tariff of the Grand Trunk came into force on the 8th Nov. The rates to Halifax now stand at \$1.10 for flour and 55c. for grain; and to St. John, at \$1.02 for flour and 51c. for grain. The rates to railway stations are: Flour to Kingston 35c., grain 18c.; flour to Prescott 43c., grain 22c.; flour to Montreal 50c., grain 25c.; flour to St. John, Quebec, 60c., grain 30c.; flour to Point Levis 80c., grain 40c.; flour to Portland 85c., grain 43c.; flour to Boston and New York 90c., grain 45c. gold.

PLUMBAGO.—A Ceylon paper says that if the world wants plumbago, and is willing to give a good price for it, Ceylon can supply the want. Fresh discoveries of the mineral are constantly made. Should mining continue at the rate of the past few years, Government will have to regulate the pursuit with reference to the safety of the people. Otherwise lives will be lost from foul air and the collapse of badly formed pits. We observe that the Chamber of Commerce found the specimens of this mineral sent some time ago from Hambantotte, to be defective from the presence of "rust," or, as the natives call it, "water mark." It will be observed that the progress of this staple export has been from 46,000 cwts. to