

stated that a certain number would be required for harvest, still that number would be largely governed by what the nature of the harvest will be. The numbers required look astonishingly large, but there are individual townships in which reports say over one hundred men will be wanted. The wages paid farm laborers do not appear to change very much and represent those paid during the working season from spring until fall.

The demand for female servants is apparently on the increase, as is shown in the decided increase in the number employed as well as the number wanted. Wages, too, show an increase, but that does not appear to bring the required relief. Female help is reported so scarce in some places that the dairying interests are allowed to suffer through insufficient help. One correspondent in Southern Manitoba stated that fifty domestics could find employment in twenty four hours in his township, and all at high wages. A total of 1,693 servants is required to supply the demand, according to the correspondents. The averages paid female servants is \$9.43½ per month with board.

FARM RENTALS.

When sending in their reports correspondents were asked to give the average rentals of farm land in their respective districts. The prices asked per acre vary from a few cents to from \$3 to \$5 per acre. The lower prices given applied, of course, to the unbroken prairie, and to land on which little or no work had been expended. The custom of working land on shares prevails in many localities. The average rental value over the province is about \$2 per acre.

Boot and Shoe Making.

During a recent visit to Hamilton, Ontario, a COMMERCIAL representative had the pleasure of visiting and inspecting one of the most interesting industrial institutions in the Dominion, namely the boot and shoe factory of John McPherson & Co., of that city. This large factory is located in a central portion of the city, quite close to the heart of the business district, and unlike most factories is a building of some architectural pretensions, and quite an ornament to the locality in which it is situated. It covers an area of 70 by 142 feet, has a basement and four floors of that area, and is well lighted from all sides.

The first movement in the work of inspection by our representative, was the ascent by elevator to the top floor, where about three score of girls were at work in the manufacture of boots and shoe tops, and many were employed at machines of the most ingenious description. Some of the sewing machines working ornamental and double row stitching were studies for a mechanic, and yet all seemed to work smoothly and with an astonishing minimum of noise.

On the front end of the upper floor is the top cutting room, where some dozen men were at work shaping out the uppers of foot wear. This room is a perfect globe of light, and necessarily so, as it requires bright light and close watching to enable the cutters to steer clear of the thin and otherwise inferior parts in the leather.

Descending to the next floor below the sole and bottoming departments are reached. The front room where the sole leather is cut out is equally as well lighted as the one immediately above it, and for the very same reason. On

this and the floor immediately below it the joining of soles and uppers, sole stitching, heel-ing and polishing and finishing is carried on, and the variety of machines bought to bear on the work is interesting and at times bewildering. To see a boot or shoe wandering around on an eccentric pivot of a queerly constructed stitching machine and coming out fastened as tightly together as if nailed all in less than a minute, is a thing the most credulous must see to believe. The processes of heel-ing and black-ing are equally interesting and on some points bewildering, and when one comes down to the street floor and views in the stock room the variety of foot wear from the heaviest laborer's boot to the lady's dress slipper or boot of the finest finish, he realizes in a kind of a way the advances made in mechanical skill since the days of our grandfathers, when Saint Crispin's only representative was the cobbler with his last, lapstone, awl and clem.

John McPherson & Co. have not lost sight of the value of comfortable quarters in which to receive customers, for their offices and sample rooms on the street floor in front are among the most commodious and elegantly fitted up connected with any Canadian factory visited by our representative. Altogether their institution is a model one, and its value as an industry to the city in which it is located may be in some measure estimated by the fact, that it gives employment to about two hundred and fifty hands.

British Columbia.

J. H. Collins, manager of the Fraser River Gold Gravel syndicate, at Yale, in response to enquiries made by a *Columbian* reporter, said that his company now had all their machinery safely across the river and in position. So far, very little working has been done, as the fitting of the massive machinery has taken up a lot of time. However, the company has great hopes of obtaining a large quantity of gold during the summer months. The boilers and machinery which were lost last fall in the Fraser, have never been recovered, and a great deal of expense has been incurred through having to purchase fresh plant from England. Mr. Collins returned yesterday to Yale.

The British Columbia Paper Manufacturing Company, Limited, with a capital stock of \$40,000 has been organized at Victoria. After a trip along all of the rivers of the province for a site for the mill the one best suited was the Sumas river in Alberni. The site was therefore chosen on the first rapids of that river. The reason the company decided to start the mill on the Sumas river, says the *Times*, instead of bidding for the bonus offered by Victoria, is that the paper can be made \$35 a ton cheaper there than in any city on the coast. There is splendid water power and the wood required in the manufacturing of paper is very plentiful in the vicinity. The company expect to have the mill running full blast within eight months.

The Miner says: "The last spike was driven in the Columbia and Kootenay railway at Nelson on Tuesday during a rainstorm, with not a resident present to witness the event—an event too that will mark an epoch in the history of the lake country. The track is now being ballasted and Mr. Wetmore expects to have it in pretty good shape within thirty days trains now covering the distance (28 miles) in two

hours. Hereafter a train will leave Robson for Nelson on Mondays and Thursdays on the arrival of the boat from Revelstoke, which will enable passengers to make the run through from Revelstoke in one day. Until the new boat at Little Dalles is completed, a train will leave Nelson on Tuesdays and Fridays in time for passengers to make connections with the boat at Revelstoke. The Nelson office will be opened next week. As soon as arrangements can be perfected an express office will also be opened."

A special meeting of the B. C. Board of Trade, Victoria, was held to receive the report of the railway committee. It was to the effect that they had communicated with the heads of the big railway companies of the continent, and appended the correspondence received in reply, requesting that having carried out their instructions they wished to be discharged. No recommendations were made by the committee. It seems that only one company entertained the proposition to connect namely, the N. P. R. It was moved "that the board after having communicated with the representatives of the trans-continental lines and Mr. Dunsmuir, and after having received several replies there to, learns with satisfaction that there is a prospect of the city having railway connection with the N. P. R. with steam ferry, and trusts that in an impending interview between President Oakes and the council, a satisfactory arrangement will be completed."

At a regular quarterly meeting of Vancouver Board of Trade held recently, Vice-President Bortaux in the chair, the secretary read communications from the Chamber of Commerce at Suva, Fiji, asking information as to the probability of the establishment of a steamship line between Fiji and Vancouver; from the Secretary of the Post Office Department, Ottawa, saying that henceforth the contents of the parcel post would be sorted en route and delivered here direct instead of being sent to Victoria; from the City Clerk stating that the City Council would assist in the efforts being made to remove the shacks from the foreshore; from the Chamber of Commerce, London, stating that it was proposed to hold a Congress of the Chambers of Commerce of the Empire in London in May, 1892 and asking for any suggestions that it would be desirable to discuss (this was referred to the Council to report to the Board); from H. A. Berry resigning his membership. After the discussion of several matters the Board then adjourned.

The *Victoria Colonist* says: While the facts have been kept very quiet, it has been rumored in shipping circles during the past week that the next would see a lusty rival enter the field against the C. P. R. Co., in competition for the Victoria and Puget Sound trade with China and Japan. It is now almost certain that this rival is the P. & O. Steamship Co., whose lines extend from England to almost every quarter of the inhabited globe. The first steamer of the new line, the Zambezi, is now hourly expected, with a full cargo, from Hong Kong and Yokohama. She will discharge her Victoria freight and passengers and then make the circuit of the Sound ports, for each of which she has some cargo. It is expected that the steamers of this line will make semi-monthly trips between Yokohama and Victoria direct, a fleet of three being utilized in the service. Whether this move on the part of the company is inspired by one of the American transcontinental lines, or is due to the C. P. R. competition with the Suez Canal is still matter for conjecture.