

CURRENT COMMENT.

Buschlen's Handy Hay Rake is well illustrated on another page of INDUSTRIAL CANADA. In a circular to the trade its many advantages are pointed out, and dealers and farmers who have not yet tried this neat, convenient and durable rake should see that they are supplied before next season opens.

The importance of the cheese industry of the province of Ontario has again been shown in the statistics for the past year. According to the Ontario Department of Agriculture there has been an increase of 114 factories, and of 11,117,828 lbs. in the output, while the total amount of money paid to patrons of the factories was nearly \$8,000,000.

Readers of INDUSTRIAL CANADA will not fail to notice the full page adv. of the Western Assurance Co. The Western is one of the strongest and most reliable companies doing business in Canada. The directors are all men of wide experience and ability, and the large volume of business written annually by the company, in both fire and marine insurance, is sufficient evidence of the popularity of the Western.

Mr. Aubrey White, Deputy Commissioner of Crown Lands, received a few days ago a piece of cardboard, part of the first sheet made at the pulp wood mill at Sault Ste. Marie. The letter which accompanied it stated that Mr. Clerque, the manager, fed the machine himself.

Interviewed relative to a recent visit to western Ontario, Mr. Blue, Director of the Bureau of Mines, said of the Petrolea oil fields: "Operations are brisk there, owing to the rise in the price of crude oil. About 40 rigs are employed drilling new wells, and for the last year they have been putting down wells at the rate of 100 per month. The total number of wells is now nearly 10,000, but while a few are relatively good the average flow over all is not more than ten imperial barrels per month. The oil area is now pretty well defined, but it has been considerably extended during recent years. I was told that an English syndicate has secured options on many properties, and it is expected that a large deal will go through soon. The refiners of Petrolea are keenly alive to the value of new processes, and every improvement is quickly adopted. The well drillers of Petrolea are famous for their skill the world over. I met one gentleman who had just returned from drilling a large number of wells in Burmah, and scores of them are employed in Europe and Australia."

A big lumber trust has been formed in British Columbia by which all the mills on the Pacific Coast will unite. The capital represented will total about \$50,000,000 and includes the fifty or sixty mills and all the retailers on the Coast, not a single retailer or mill being left out. The details of the scheme, while very elaborate, are said to be perfected to such an extent that there is no possible chance of any disagreement. The combine will be known as the Central Lumber Co., and all business will be done through the central San Francisco office, but shipped direct from each mill. It is anticipated that immediately after the new year prices of lumber in British Columbia, as a result of this trust, will be largely advanced. Shipping men say that the demand for tonnage for immediate loading to transport lumber to Central and South America, Oriental and Coastwise points, is better than any time since the palmy days of 1889.

It is not improbable that the works of the Watson Heater Co., of Montreal, will be located at Cornwall, Ont. In addition to the manufacture of heaters the company would make all kinds of plumbers' furnishings. They expect to start with 60 and will increase their staff to 200 men.

The city of St. John, N. B., has an ambition to be considered the winter port of Canada and to achieve that end has offered facilities to the different steamship companies running there. Secretary Wills, of the Toronto Board of Trade, received the following from St. John a few days ago: "I am instructed to draw your attention to the fact that the following lines of steamers are now making St. John their winter port, and to ask you to

kindly lay the matter before the members of your board, and also to give it the utmost publicity through your newspapers, and by any other means that may be available, viz:—Beaver Line, to Liverpool; Furness Line, to Glasgow; West India Steamship Line, calling at Bermuda, St. Croix, St. Kitts, Antigua, Dominica, Martinique, St. Lucia, Barbados and Trinidad. As arrangements have been made for through freight rates by the above lines, as low, if not lower than via United States ports, this board trust that from a national standpoint importers and shippers will endeavor to make use of the Canadian winter port for future exports and imports from the various ports named." The letter was signed by Mr. Ira Cornwall, Secretary of the St. John Board of Trade.

The Provincial Government Bulletin of Manitoba, issued Dec. 13th, being the last crop bulletin of the season, gives the total wheat acreage in that province as 1,140,276, from which 31,775,938 bushels were raised, an average of close to 28 bushels per acre. The total grain crop, taking in all grains, is 61,366,472 bushels, an amount nearly 4,000,000 bushels in excess of the Government's estimate, made just before the threshers got to work. The bulletin says that 5,000 harvest hands from Ontario assisted in garnering the crop and were paid \$400,000 by the farmers in wages.

A tourist who recently visited the Keewatin district gives the following account of industrial progress there: "The Lake of the Woods Milling Company's flour mill at that point is one of the most complete on the continent, having a capacity of 2,000 barrels daily. The lumbering industry gives employment to seven large saw mills with a combined output of 100,000,000 board measure per year. A fleet of twenty-three steamers ply regularly on the Lake of the Woods and Rainy River, besides numerous launches and other pleasure crafts, all owned in and operated from Rat Portage. Ten fishing companies employing a fleet of 136 boats ship their catch, the value of which it is estimated will approximate \$4,000,000 this season, from this port. These, with several minor industries, support a population of 5,500, which is rapidly increasing." Activity is further increased in this section owing to the developments in the Lake of the Woods gold mining fields.

ARE YOU A LIVE RETAILER? To dealers in general dry-goods throughout Canada this question is addressed by one of the oldest and most popular wholesale houses in Toronto. The firm of Gordon, Mackay & Co. are known from Halifax to Vancouver, and the few pointers given by them on the first inside cover page of INDUSTRIAL CANADA should be noted by every live retailer throughout the country.

The importance of the Canadian Soo Canal is shown in the returns of traffic through the canal from the opening on Sept. 9th to Dec. 6th, inclusive, the last day on which this canal was opened. The total number of vessels which passed through was 1,189, of which 604 were Canadian, and 585 United States. The tonnage of the Canadian vessels was 126,534 and of United States vessels 623,092. Of the freight carried through the canal the total tonnage was 595,837, of which 362,268 tons were coal, copper, silver and iron ores, and 180,171 tons grain, flour, malt, salt, clay bricks, etc.

A shipment of 10,000 barrels of oatmeal has been made to Copenhagen by an Ottawa milling firm.

The Canadian representatives in the Deep Waterways Commission appointed by the Dominion Cabinet are men well qualified to represent Canadian interests. Mr. O. A. Howland, of Toronto, president of the Deep Waterways Association, is one of them, and he has associated with him two eminent engineers in the persons of Messrs. T. C. Keefer and Thos. Munro. They will act without emolument, but their expenses will be paid by the country.

A rush of gold-miners is going on towards Trout Lake on the C.P.R. 50 miles from Vancouver, B.C., where a rich ledge is reported, bearing \$45 to the ton.