

past winter, which our informant says is a thing unprecedented in the history of that plant. Several water systems in the Maritime Provinces and in Quebec were fitted out by the company with pipes and specials during the past summer and fall, while the bulk of the winter's output of pipe has gone to Halifax for the new gas company now at work in that city. The fitting up of the large rolling mill, in which puddled bar and bar iron are made, was begun last autumn, and two months ago work was begun in the former department after a silence of nearly four years. There is now turned out daily a large quantity of puddled bar for rolling mill use. About 500 men are employed in the various departments, so that the town is quite a busy one.

Our correspondent adds: "Any time that you or your friends are down this way going to Halifax or St. John, I hope that you will make it a point to come in and see the works. The trains are very convenient for stopping over for a few hours, if a short time only can be spared; but to any resident of Ontario or Quebec who can afford a day or two, the trip would be enjoyable. The works are well worth seeing, the scenery around here is rather good, and there is some very fair trout fishing within a short distance. Halifax is going to have an extensive 'blow-out' this summer in the way of an aquatic carnival, which ought to prove an attraction to some of you western men."

#### FOR GROCERS AND PROVISION DEALERS.

Now are the days for making maple sugar.

Stocks of dried fruits in Montreal are light.

Lard and products weak and lower in Chicago Wednesday.

Canned goods dull in New York yesterday, vegetables mostly tending downward.

The Boston *Transcript* suggests that the United States may raise horses to satisfy the demand for horse-flesh in Germany and elsewhere.

The wholesale tea merchants of Boston are remonstrating before the ways and means committee in Washington against the proposed duty on tea.

A soap manufacturer is placing on the market a new kind of soap which is made in thin sheets and sold in books, out of which it can be torn like bank checks.

Bad as the weather is, the sales of fruit, such as oranges, lemons, bananas, in Toronto and neighborhood, keep up well. The California dried fruits are making an excellent impression, too.

For January and February there is a gain in British imports of £7,342,000, or 26 per cent., and of exports of £3,710,000, or 23 per cent. Of the imports one-third is contributed by food stuffs.

At an auction of damaged teas held in Montreal the other day, more than 1,000 packages were sold, and the prices realized from retailers present were in some cases higher than those of sound tea.

While most of the pine apples sold in the United States in recent years have come from Cuba, the cultivation of this fruit in Florida has increased rapidly. The *Garden and Forest* says that 50,000 crates were shipped last season from sections of that State other than the Keys.

The three P's! Along with patience and perseverance, says Adams, we have classed as essential to success in life, whatever be our aim, the virtue of punctuality. A man who keeps his time will keep his word; in truth, he cannot keep his word unless he does keep his time.

The growth of the honey industry in the United States has been very rapid. According to the last census, says *Bradstreet's*, the production during the preceding year was 63,398,327 pounds, compared with only 25,743,208 pounds ten years earlier. It is not generally known that Iowa led in production with 6,813,000 pounds, although Utah and other western States have increased heavily.

According to a Havana correspondent of the *New England Grocer*, the total amount of new crop sugar to March 1st becomes 63,298 tons. If the second half of the grinding season does as well as the first, the total yield for Cuba for 1896 will be 126,596 tons. Last year the crop was estimated at 1,000,000 tons. The probable shortage this year will therefore be 873,000 tons, or over 87 per cent. of the normal crop.

The president of the Illinois Retail Grocers and Merchants' Association said in his address the other day: "This evil of demoralizing prices and the ruinous business methods incident thereto is before us; we will have to meet it as best we can; not by following in the footsteps of those who practice it; not by publishing misleading advertisements of special sales of one day, etc.; deception of this kind ought to be prohibited by law, for it is conducive to fraud."

After your grocery store has been painted and cleaned up, why not have a "Spring Opening," when you get in your latest consignment of spring goods? In connection with this subject, the *Merchants' Review* says:—"It would be a good advertisement of the business, and would require but a small sum to announce it in the local papers. At

these openings it is a good plan to exhibit different ways of preparing certain specialties for the table, free samples being distributed."

At the London Imperial Institute meeting, Indian section of the Society of Arts, recently, Mr. C. Tripp read a paper on "The Tobacco Industry of India and the Far East." The speaker pointed out that Sumatra was enjoying an amount of prosperity perhaps unequaled in any other part of the globe. India's natural advantages, though inferior to those of Sumatra, might be turned to excellent account in tobacco growing, if skill, experience and more capital were bestowed upon the industry and the prejudice against home-made (British) cigars could be overcome.

#### ITEMS FOR DRY GOODS DEALERS.

In the Leeds woolen trade there is a more cheerful feeling.

Beautiful bright tinted alpaca dress goods are now in great demand in Yorkshire.

Both trimmed and untrimmed skirts are fashionable in London; for walking the latter are more general.

The South of Scotland tweed trade is improving slowly, and the Kirkcaldy linen industries are in a healthy state.

The new English capes are more stylish than last year. The smartest in velvet and *peau de soie* are gored on the shoulders and then flare out to the hem.

The worsted coating trade in the United States has been adversely affected by large importations of woollens immediately after the abolition of weight duties.

The *Drapers' Record* says that English spring hats, spaced black and white in chip and bernina straw, with fancy straw edge, are for the moment very fashionable.

In London, wateau or sacque jackets in cloth and satin still reign supreme. The skirts are cut much shorter. Black and écreu net insertion forms a bright border.

Commercial travellers, after the experience some of them had in being snowed up last week, are shy about going out until there are conclusive evidences of "ethereal mildness."

Nearly all kinds of furs show a decline in the London market, according to a late cable. Mink skins declined 15 per cent; otter, 5 to 10; red fox 17½; cross and silver fox, 30; skunk 35, and bear 40.

Messrs. Rylands & Sons, Limited, are now represented in Canada by Mr. W. E. Williams (Montreal), Mr. W. H. Tetlow (Halifax, N.S.), Mr. C. H. Ingham (British Columbia), and Mr. T. Bilsbury (Toronto).

Bradford advices to the *Record* are that yarns are 2½ per cent. higher and merino wools 5 to 10 per cent up. Raw alpaca has changed hands at extreme rates; nearly all the visible supply has got into consumers' hands.

In Paris large cravats of tulle lace, baptiste and muslin are just now extremely fashionable. They give a dressy appearance to the plainest as well as the richest toilette. Tulle in fact appears everywhere and on everything.

In Nottingham, the lace trade is dull and the hosiery trade unsettled. There is a good demand for silk falls and veilings. Crochet and American laces and high trimmings are selling. Black merino stockings are active, but less doing in tan shades.

Including machinery recently disposed of, 360,000 spindles are, it is estimated, stopped in Oldham, or about to be stopped. Three firms have given up business, three others have closed their mills, and six others are about to be stopped. — *Drapers' Record*.

The report of the first auction sale of ostrich feathers held in London this year states that the quantity of feathers which were offered at the sales commencing on the 3rd inst., was much smaller, having been 55,200 pounds, against 65,700 pounds in December, and 66,100 pounds in January, 1895.

The Macclesfield silk dyers are stiff in their claim for five pence an hour and a fifty-four hour week, and work is being sent from that town to Leek and other centres of the trade. The London *Drapery World* is bold enough to say that the Macclesfield dyers are "amateurs, and not good at that," which makes the Macclesfield papers very indignant.

Late arrivals in London include the following: Mr. Wm. Agnew, Montreal; Mr. W. R. Brock and the Misses Brock, Toronto; Mr. G. B. Fraser, of Messrs. Greenshields, Son & Co., Montreal; Mr. W. B. Freeman, of Messrs. McPherson & Freeman, Truro, N.S.; Messrs. C. Desjardins and E. H. Botterell, Montreal; Mr. C. A. Williams, Toronto.

What with zero weather in Quebec, and a snow blockade in Ontario within the week, the outlook for spring trade has been somewhat remote. But since we saw yesterday morning crocuses lifting their heads among the snow, faith in the coming of spring has revived.