

which, if necessary, can sit from time to time in various cities besides Ottawa. The board will be composed of experts in the various leading lines, such as groceries, hardware, or dry goods. To them will be referred all questions respecting valuations, classifications, etc. Bulletins, giving information respecting rulings and interpretations, will be issued from time to time. To this board will also be referred all questions relative to uniformity in Customs classifications.

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The decision of the London (Ont.) police magistrate, in the case of a grocer who delivered liquor to a customer, should be heeded by all members of the trade who are so situated as to be able to oblige their customers by undertaking little commissions for them at the liquor store. There are people who dislike to go to a liquor store on any business, and if they can get their grocer to execute any orders for them there, they not infrequently trouble him with the business. They buy goods from him which his wagon is probably on the way to deliver, in passing the liquor store, and it is only a little act of accommodation to a customer for the grocer's boy to stop and purchase the liquor that is wanted and take it on, with the other parcels, to the customer's house. But it seems this is illegal. The illegality probably consists in the addition of 5 or 10 cents for service, which appeared to be added to the retail cost in the case of some liquors delivered by Mr. McBean. It surely could not be in the mere buying and delivering of the liquor. If it were, then no one could purchase liquor through a messenger or an agent. If grocers simply do a message for a customer, without adding any charges for their service, it seems certain that they can deliver liquor without being liable for any breach of the license law. Two or three years ago a retail grocer of this city was fined for delivering liquor in West Toronto Junction, but the ground was not the illegality of a grocer's buying and delivering liquor to a customer, but the sale of liquor outside of the territory covered by a liquor dealer's license. The fine, if we mistake not, was afterwards remitted on appeal.

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The partition of the United States sugar trade between the Trust and Claus Spreckels leaves the latter supreme, so far as domestic competition is concerned, in the territory west of the Rocky Mountains. But the San Francisco refinery of that sugar poten-

tate does not provide all the sugar consumed in that region, as witness shipments being made from the Vancouver refinery. And now the competition of British subjects from another quarter threatens to be an irrepressible hindrance to Mr. Spreckels' monopoly. Hong Kong refines sugar and ships it to San Francisco to sell there at prices which the local refinery cannot well meet. Hundreds of tons of this article have already been imported by way of the Sound and British Columbian ports. It is produced in Hong Kong by the very cheapest kind of coolie labor; the sugar enters that port free; the bags cost next to nothing; fuel is cheap, and against such odds the American refiners, working with high priced labor, are powerless to compete. The people of the Sandwich Islands had the benefit of the United States market for their raw sugar, which was admitted duty-free, when the latter country collected a revenue of about 2c. a pound on all other imported raw sugar. The passing of the McKinley Tariff put every other sugar-producing country on the same footing, and the Sandwich Islands lost their special advantage. It is now proposed by Claus Spreckels, in order to offset the incoming of refined sugar from Hong Kong, to establish a refinery at Honolulu, in the Sandwich Islands, where labor is cheap, and the raw material is obtainable right on the spot. As an illustration of the depreciation in the Hawaiian sugar trade, it is stated that shares in the Hawaiian Commercial Company, which were worth \$37 each three years ago, have dropped to \$2.75. This scheme ought to help the Sandwich Islanders to get rid of their sugar, and should enable Claus to produce a volume of cheap sugar equal to that imported from Hong Kong. He will not have a half cent. duty to pay either, as the Hong Kong refiners have.

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The fresh fruit trade of the world has been immensely expanded by the development of transportation facilities in the last few years. The effect of that development has been almost revolutionary and has been the means of changing former wastes, particularly in tropical islands and countries, into groves, orchards and gardens whose fruits are exchangeable for millions of dollars every year. How much more of a stimulus the same cause will give the trade in fresh fruit depends upon the extent to which means of carrying and saving the fruit can be further improved and the rates of freight lowered, for consumption can be counted on to grow, if condition and price can be made satisfactory to consumers. The great consumption of fruit in the green state is affording a partial solution of the problem of what shall be

done with fruits preserved by canning or evaporating. If all the green fruit that there is a market for could be got on that market in time, condition, and at a price necessary for business, there would be a very manageable surplus to be preserved. An experiment of which the issue is watched with interest by fruit growers on this continent, is now on trial. If it succeeds it will determine a new mode of disposing of fruit in the green state and will probably extend the acreage under fruit in this country. Five cars were shipped the other day from Sacramento in California destined for Liverpool. The consignment consisted of pears, peaches, plums and apricots. It reached New York in prime condition, and was there loaded on steamers of the White Star line. This is the first shipment of California fruit ever made to Europe. The fruit was picked ripe instead of green, the shippers desiring that on its arrival it may possess all the natural flavor that characterizes it in the region of production. It will have travelled 6,000 miles by the time it reaches Liverpool. The through freight is \$5.70 per hundred pounds. If this venture succeeds for California, why could it not succeed for fruit-growing districts of Canada? Most of our fruit grows several hundred miles nearer to the British market than the California fruit does. We have at least equally good means of transit overland, if we had but an equally good fast Atlantic service. This latter requirement would be of service for many other lines of export, particularly for eggs, and it is to be hoped we will have it soon.

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We have received a copy of the introduction to the 28th annual number of "Poor's Manual of Railroads." The Manual itself for 1892 is now about ready for delivery. This great compilation of railway statistics teems on every page with information of the utmost importance to that very numerous class of people who are interested in knowing all that is knowable about railway securities. Railway affairs enter so largely into the very warp of national finances that no statement of their condition can be too exhaustive. The Introduction shows that since 1867 when the first number of the Manual appeared, the total mileage of roads in the United States has increased from 39,250 miles to 170,601 miles, or 435 per cent. In the west the increase has been greatest, rising from 15,777 miles in 1867 to 100,599 miles at the end of 1891. In the South also the growth has been great, all the way from 9,940 miles to 32,110 miles. The business of the roads has increased even more remarkably than their extension. In 1866 the total tonnage did not exceed 47,872,500 tons; in 1891 it amounted to 704,398,609 tons. The mileage built in 1891 was 4,471 miles. The gross earnings in 1891 were \$1,138,024,459, or 9.1 per cent. of the total investment. The net earnings were \$356,209,880, or equal to 3.1 per cent. of the total investment,