Returns furnished by the Banks to the DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE.

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904 1,612 962 810,929 4,638,235 1,671,830 3(6,630,754 6,277,119 11,261,(03 39,318,218 J. M. COURTNEY, Deputy Minister of Finance.

-Year by year the gold production of the world is increasing, and the results for 1891 were the largest on record. In round numbers the production for the last five years was as follows: 1887, 5,097,600 ounces; 1888, 5,251, 000 ounces; 1889, 5,641 000 ounces; 1890, 5,586,000 ounces, and 1891, 6,033,000 ounces. For the first time in many years there was a set back in 1890.

—The Austrians are said to consume more tobacco than any other nation on the globe, civilized or savage. Recent investigation by eminent statisticians gives the number of pounds consumed annually by each 100 inhabitants of the different European countries as follows: Spain, 110 pounds; Italy, 128; Great Britain, 138; Russia, 182; Denmark, 224; Norway, 229, and Austria, 273 pounds.

—A French electro metallurgical company, which employs the Herault-Killian aluminum process, asserts that it will be able to sell the aluminum at a price equivalent to less than 15 cents a pound, provided it is in a position to dispose of a yearly output of 3,000 tons of the metal.

-A public meeting was held in Vancouver the other day to discuss the proposal of a London company to build a drydock at a cost of \$1.500,000, and the company ask a bonus of \$200,000, to be paid in 4 per cent. city debentures over forty years. The meeting passed a resolution urging the city council to accept the offer.

-It is reported in Montreal that the past season of navigation has been a profitable one for the Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Co., in spite of the mishaps to their steamers "Columbian" and "Bohemian." The board is said to intend declaring a dividend before the annual meeting in February.

-A deputation from the Boards of Trade of Ottawa, Toronto and Hamilton visited Ottawa this week to urge upon the Ministry the necessity of introducing a federal insolvency Act at the next session of Parliament.

—A Manitoba crop bulletin just issued shows a considerable falling off from previous estimates. The final estimate for the yield of wheat for the entire province is about 17 bushels to the acre; oats, 35 to the acre; barley, 30; potatoes, 200 bushels, and turnips 400 bushels.

-Shorthand is authoritatively recognized for use in the British army; it has long been so in Prussia and some other foreign services. In the Queen's Regulations for this year mention is made of certain appointments, and it is stated that preference will be given to those who can write shorthand.

-Son - "Pa!" Father -- "Well?" "Is a vessel a boat?" "Yes." "What kind of a boat is a blood vessel?" "It's a life boat; now run away to bed."

Commercial.

MONTREAL MARKETS.

MONTREAL, Dec. 21st, 1892.

ASHES.—We have again to report a duller and weaker market, first quality pots now only bringing \$4 30, seconds \$3.65; pearls nominal at \$5 25. Receipts are small, but December figures are always small. There have been no shipments since close of navigation.

DAIBY PRODUCE.—There is very little cheese changing hands just now, but holders are firm in their ideas, and the range of the market is from 10§ to 11c. per lb. For good dairy butter there is a steidy enquiry at quotatione; the stiffness of holders of creamery prevents much business doing in that special line. We quote late-made creamery 23 to 23½c. per pound; earlier makes 22 to 22½c.; Townships, 20 to 21c.; Morrisburg, 18 to 19c⁴; Western, 17 to 18c. For eggs there at 16 to 17c., and Western, 14½ to 15½c. per dozen.

DRY GOODS.—This week ushered in a spell of zero weather, which has appreciably helped city retail trade. Wholesale merchants report an increase of sorting orders from this quarter, and a fair sprinkling of country letter orders from certain sections where a moderate snowfall has helped business, but there is not yet enough for heavy teaming and lumbering purposes. European advices report some harden-

and the second secon