

tary, Mr. J. M. O'Laughlin, read an address to Mr. W. M. Ronald, president North-West Commercial Travellers' Association, expressing, on behalf of the members, their high appreciation of the valuable services given to this association during the two years he occupied the position of president, and assuring him that in retiring from the highest office in the gift of this association he carries the best wishes of every member.

Mr. Ronald in reply thanked the members for the kind expressions tendered him. He looked forward to great things for Western Canada and for the association.

We take an account of the proceedings from the last issue of the *Winnipeg Commercial*: The toast list was resumed, Hon. Mr. Greenway replying to the toast of "The Lieutenant-Governor and Legislature." He pointed out in a brief speech that we have a great heritage here, but what we want is people. He quoted statistics to show that we were making progress, but not such as we should hope for. He intimated taking up a vigorous immigration policy during the year. Hon. Mr. Smart followed, giving an account of his own experience when a commercial traveller himself. He, therefore, knew something of the tribulations which the knights of the grip are subjected to.

United States Consul Taylor replied to the toast of "The President," in his usual happy style. He spoke in favor of greater commercial freedom between the United States and Canada, and intimated that if the English speaking people of the world were united, they could control the universe.

Mr. Riley replied in a very serious and argumentative strain to the toast of "The Commercial and Manufacturing interests." He spoke of the importance of travellers to the commercial interests, and paid a tribute to the ability of our western travellers. The wise manager would endeavor to have good travellers, and they would further try to keep in touch and become personally familiar with their travelling representatives.

"The Railway Interest," responded to by Superintendent Whyte, of the Canadian Pacific. Mr. Dutton, of the Northern Pacific, and Robert Kerr, of the Canadian Pacific, "The Press" and "The Ladies," wound up the list of toasts.

A COLUMN FOR GROCERS.

The sale is reported of a valuable tract of salt territory in the Western New York region for \$80,000, the purchaser being William H. Smith, who hired himself out as a common laborer in an adjoining salt mine in order to investigate the deposits.

Attempts have for some time been making to acclimatize the tea plant in the Caucasus, and Russian journals commence to speak hopefully of success. From the tests made the quality is reported as attractive, and, on the authority of French and German naturalists, it is said that there is no country better suited for the culture of the tea plant than the littoral of the Black Sea between Batoum and Soukhoum, the climate of which is warm, moist, and equable.

It is the general belief, says the *Winnipeg Commercial*, that the quantity of butter held by country merchants in Manitoba this year is very large, and the outlook is not encouraging. The season is past for handling, to advantage for British Columbia trade, and to ship it eastward means low prices. The farmers are likely to come out better on their

butter transactions this year than country merchants, as the prices paid to farmers have averaged pretty high.

Foreign papers are giving some attention to the kola nut, as a possible partial substitute for or adulterant of coffee. The nuts are said to show a very perceptible strain of caffeine, and, after roasting and grinding, to have yielded of fair strength and attraction. It is further reported that they are being used now in the manufacture of chocolate with some success, especially when mixed with cocoa and cacao butter.

The stock of Valencia raisins in London on December 31 was cabled at 1,800 tons. On the same date 1888 it was 2,532 tons, and in 1887, 804 tons.

During 1889 Halifax firms exported to the West Indies, Demerara, Brazil, and Cuba, 267,728 quintals of dry and 38,715 barrels of pickled fish. From these places they imported 12,425 hogsheads, 339 tierces, 2,952 barrels, and 120,021 bags of sugar; 12,216 puncheons, 975 tierces, and 2,147 barrels of molasses.

A practice, and a most objectionable one, which obtains in many grocery and fruit stores, is that of allowing clerks to use their fingers in filling an order from a package of dates or figs. In the case of prunes, currants, some grades of raisins, and other dried fruits, which are subject to a bath before cooking, it does not seem so distasteful. But when the frequently not over-clean digits of a clerk, or the proprietor himself, are used to literally claw loose the fruit that goes direct to one's table, the impression so made upon the customer is not a pleasant one. Fingers may have been made before hooks, but the careful storekeeper will use a hook made for the purpose and then bring his scoop into requisition. Considerations of this nature are not lost sight of by the observant purchaser.

Travelling Phrenologist—Young man, your head indicates artistic ability of a high order. Have you ever cultivated your talents? Young Man—Oh, yes, Sir! bin drawin' molasses off and on for about a year, I reckon.—*Texas Siftings*.

The *Hamilton Herald* has been shown a fine sample of raisins from grapes grown in the open air in that city. They were taken from the vine on the first of October, 1889, and laid aside in a cool room. The vintage of 1889 was almost totally destroyed by the extreme frost of the 28th of May last, followed by atmospheric influences favorable to mildew, completing the destruction of plant life. Despite this, however, could this fruit have received the same process of raisin curing as undergone in Spain or California, it would, the *Herald* thinks, likely bear a favorable comparison.

The *London Grocers' Gazette* relates an amusing incident. A fish hawker named Attrell was charged with stealing a piece of bacon, the property of the International Tea Company. It appears that he entered the company's shop, and seeing some choice pieces of bacon bearing a ticket with the words "Take the piece," without further ado marched off with ticket and bacon. He was displaying his prize to a wondering crowd when a policeman appeared and marched Attrell back to the shop, where he was informed that the bacon was for sale at so much per pound, providing that the customer would "Take the piece." Attrell at the Police Court pleaded very laconically: "I saw the bacon marked 'Take the piece,' and knowing that they were in the habit of giving presents I took it"—a statement which convulsed the

whole court, even the magistrates joining in the laughter. The bench did not convict Attrell, as they doubted whether he desired to steal the bacon or only intended the matter as a joke.

BOOT, SHOE, AND LEATHER NOTES.

The Chicago correspondent of the *Shoe and Leather Review* notes with satisfaction the tendency of sensible ideas in lasts. Men are wearing broad toes with full widths. Women are asking for a common-sense toe with moderate heels.

Artistic American bootblacks after shining a shoe now give it a supplemental rub with a long piece of snow-white flannel, which it is said imparts a dazzling finish to the polish.

Italian factories are turning out boots of singular pattern. The soles and heels are riveted to the uppers in such a way that the heels when worn down on one side may be taken off and turned around. Soles can be similarly removed and new ones put on.

Manufacturers of fancy leathers, says the *Shoe and Leather Review*, will be glad to learn that plush-covered cases, toilet articles, etc., are being replaced by leather. Plush soils quickly and silk plush has given way to cotton plush, which does not wear well. Leather is now so cheap and varied in color and pattern that buyers prefer leather-covered goods to any other. Ooze, calf, and seal grain are among the favorite goods. American travelling salesmen notice the decline in the sale of plush-covered articles, particularly albums.

The learned punster of the *Shoe and Leather Reporter* has discovered that the French word *cordonnier*, "shoemaker," differs in only a letter or two from *cordonneur*, "corn-giver." He thinks that many wearers of shoes will appreciate the significance of the analogy.

A London shoemaker named Walkden made a pair of shoes for the Duke of Leeds. When he brought them to the latter's house the chaplain was present and asked the price.

"Half a guinea," said Walkden.

"Half a guinea for a pair of shoes?" replied the chaplain. "Why, I can go to Cranbourne Alley and buy as good a pair for five shillings."

"And I can go to Moorfields and buy a better sermon for threepence than my lord gives you a guinea for."

An American journal says that one of the leading wholesale firms in Chicago has written to its customers offering to cancel their contracts for rubber goods, owing to the unusually mild weather. The manager of the rubber department said: "We don't care to see our customers loaded with goods that are not saleable, and run the risk of losing money. We prefer to carry the rubbers ourselves. Besides, a little leniency like this helps to make us solid with our trade."

A beautiful work of art has recently been produced at Berlin. It consists of a tree in embossed leather displaying the genealogy of Prince Bismarck-Schonhausen and the Counts of Bismarck-Bohlen, omitting all collateral lines. The design and the genealogical facts were supplied by Prof. Adolf Hilderbrandt, the well-known authority on heraldry.

"Visitors always welcome," is the sign at the door of a big engine works at Syracuse. The same greeting appears at the entrance of Gillott's pen works in England.