

There is no roller mill in all this section of rapidly developing and wheat-growing country." So says the local paper of that place.

A car-load of grist mill machinery has been shipped by H. W. Petrie, of Brantford, to Soda Creek, British Columbia. He is now about to fill an order for saw mill machinery for the same neighborhood. This machinery is transported overland in waggons some 400 miles after it leaves the C.P.R.

What is said to be the largest cargo of wheat ever carried by one vessel was recently received at Liverpool per steamer *Iram*. It consisted of 200,000 bus. of India wheat from Bombay, and weighed about 5,100 tons. In addition to this she was laden with 260 tons of cotton, and the entire cargo was landed in 24 hours.

The wheat acreage of the United Kingdom last year was 2,356,000, the smallest for years, and the acreage next year promises to be smaller still. The yield per acre this year is estimated at 27 bushels, making the total crop 63,664,000 bushels. The supposed requirements for seed and food are put at 211,675,000 bushels, leaving a deficiency of 148,000,000 bushels to be supplied by importations.

The roller flour mill at Carberry, Manitoba, owned by the Manitoba Milling and Brewing Co., was blown up on Thursday of last week, by an explosion of flour dust. The loss through damage to the mill and machinery is estimated at from \$8,000 to \$10,000. There was an insurance of \$19,000 on the mill. The mill will be rebuilt as soon as possible. The mill had only been running about a year, and had a capacity of 200 barrels per day.

The average export price of wheat during 1881 was \$1.11 per bushel, and in 1885 it was 86.2 cents, having declined steadily for four years. The average price for 1886 will fall below that of 1885, but farmers of this country seem to be alive and able to provide food and clothing for themselves and their families, despite the "crushing competition" of India and other wheat-exporting countries. Another generation may fare much worse, but this generation can do little, if anything, to avert possible evil consequences from over-production of wheat, which is an accomplished fact, and yet which is not causing as much trouble in the producing as in the consuming countries.—*Northwestern Miller*.

It may not be generally known that a syndicate of grain dealers exists in Toronto, composed of three or four of the strongest houses there, the object of which is to agree upon the prices they will pay for their grain, and arrange for the most favorable freight terms. Further than this, the Syndicate's mission does not extend, as the different firms comprising the combination have their respective houses on the other side, through which they sell their grain. The scheme, we are informed, has worked admirably, as through its agency the several members are enabled to fill their orders at a uniform price, and by engaging a much larger amount of freight than any single firm could do, they can obtain it at the lowest rate. After these privileges are secured, the different firms then sell their respective shipments in the best market, as there is no pooling of profits on sales.—*Trade Bulletin*.

### General Notes.

The Dominion revenue shows a surplus of \$1,647,582 for the first six months of the fiscal year.

According to the *British Trade Journal*, Scotch and German courts of law have recently decided that the employment of barbed wire on fences along the highway is illegal, because it endangers the safety of passers-by.

The largest corporation engaged under the British flag is said to be the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. The Company's fleet now afloat amounts to 200,000 tons, costing nearly £6,000,000 sterling.

In referring to the Hudson's Bay Railway the *Minneapolis Northwestern Miller* says: "The people of the British Northwest are to be congratulated upon the bright prospects which will be opened by the construction of a new and important commercial highway."

A rapid utilization of natural gas has crowded other artificial schemes to the front for supplying cheap gas. A dozen engineers and inventors have schemes nearly perfected by which gas can be produced at a cost ranging from 10 to 25 cents per 1000 feet.

An American exchange says: "None of the great European nations are reducing their debts. It is stated that Russia's public debt increases at the rate of \$200,000,000 annually. It will be in order for her to enact a gigantic system of national industrial development soon through the aid of a high protection tariff."

The month of November was an active one on the Clyde. The vessels built aggregated 16,690 tons or 192,000 for the year. The number of vessels launched was 12, of which 9 were steamships and three sailing vessels. The outlook, as viewed by the *Herald*, is more encouraging, but the development of activity is and must necessarily continue to be slow. The tonnage, contracted for during November aggregates 32,000 tons.

The *Chicago Journal of Commerce* proposes the following way to reduce the surplus revenue of the United States: "Pay over the net proceeds of all duties or 10 to 20 per cent. of the same as bounties to those engaging in the several industries. That is, pay over the sugar revenue to sugar growers *pro rata* of production; the silk and woollen and linen and cotton and iron and wool duties, each, to those engaged in producing these goods."

The British Board of Trade returns for last month are of a much more satisfactory character than those for any month for a long time past, and, says the *Times*, will probably convince the most skeptical observers that a revival of commercial activity has actually begun. The imports amounted to £33,051,000, an increase of £3,307,000, or about 11 per cent., and the exports to £17,570,000, an increase of £1,105,000, or about 6½ per cent.

More lumber was sold and exported from Ottawa to the United States during the first quarter of the current year than ever before during the same period in its history. The cut this season will be fully up to if not in excess of the average. The total amount of lumber manufactured by the Ottawa mills during the past season is placed at 288,000,000 feet. The prin-

cipal destinations of the consignments sent from Ottawa to the United States were Burlington, Albany, New York and Boston. A large proportion, however, of the lumber sent to the United States has been exported from thence to South America, the West Indies and Africa. The square timber trade which at one time was so largely carried on along the tributaries of the Ottawa River has been almost entirely abandoned, nothing having been done in that way during the past year.

### A Coming New Ramie Industry.

For centuries the East Indies and China have produced a fiber much finer and stronger than flax, and very valuable to mix with silk in manufacture. This plant is a species of nettle, called ramie, growing some five feet high and producing, in the climate of Louisiana, three crops a year, in northern Mississippi two crops and in Tennessee one crop.

The stock grows from ¼ to ½ inch in diameter, it is a woody stem, and the bark or fiber is quite thick, has a heavy cuticle on the outside and carries a great deal of gum which is not easy to dissolve or destroy so as to readily disintegrate the fiber. To compete with the cheap labor of the Indies some machinery and chemical process is necessary, but as yet the process is slow.

To remove the fibre the stalks are rotted in water or steamed or boiled under pressure, but if allowed to dry the cuticle adheres to the fibre and turns black, while the gum prevents the disintegration as before stated. The fibre is readily bleached and resists the action of bleaching chemicals admirably.

We have seen some experiments in removing the fibre and dissolving the gum and bleaching which came so near a success that we are satisfied a practical result will soon be reached. There is here a very promising field for experiment and one which must eventually lead to the establishment of an immense industry. We shall be happy to have reports from those who have experimented in this product, for publication.—*Journal of Commerce*.

MALEE & BROWN, dealers in liquor, Vancouver, B.C., have dissolved partnership. James Mallee retires.

THE *London Economist* says that during the first ten months of 1886 the English succeeded in making loans to the governments and municipalities of the British colonies to the extent of 14½ millions sterling, not including their participation in a loan of six millions sterling to India. Of foreign government loans they secured 15½ millions sterling, principally to Brazil and the Argentine Confederation, while of foreign loans they secured more than ten millions, principally in South America. The English fully maintain their rank as the great money-lenders of the world, and they devote their energies mainly to that branch of business, which seems at the present time the only thing in which they are making any profits. What they lend is nominally money, but is really furnished in the form of manufactured goods, so that they get in one and the same transaction a market for the production of their industries and interest on their capital.—*Banker's Magazine*.