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ELECTRICAL, Mechanical and Milling News,

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EDITOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Correspondence is invited upon all topics pertinent to the electrical, mechanical and milling interests.

THE Government has decided to spend \$30,000 in procuring a supply of the best seed wheat for gratuitous distribution throughout the Northwest territories. The work of distribution will be entrusted to Mr. A. McKay, superintendent of the Brandon Experimental Farm, preference being given to those whose crops failed last year.

MR. Alderman Hewitt, of Toronto, thinks he has solved the vexed problem of how to dispose of electric wires. He would substitute hollow iron for stone street kerbs, and through them he would run the wires. Several electricians and engineers of note are said to have signified their approval of the scheme, and the suggestion will receive further consideration.

THE suspension of Messrs. A. W. Morris & Bro., proprietors of the Canada Cordage Works, Montreal, a few months ago, called forth expressions of regret and sympathy on every hand. It is not surprising, therefore, that the news that they have effected a satisfactory adjustment of their difficulties and will immediately resume business, is received with pleasure by the business community.

THE importance to Canada of developing commercial relations with the West Indies was recently the subject of comment in these columns. We learn that the people of Jamaica purpose holding an exhibition in their city of Kingston next year, and this year should be taken advantage of by Canadians, especially manufacturers of articles for which a market exists, to bring the merits of Canadian productions prominently to the notice of the islanders.

A BILL introduced by the Hon. C. H. Tupper in the Dominion Parliament provides, that twelve months after it becomes law, sawdust or other mill refuse cannot be thrown into any navigable rivers or

streams in the Dominion. This will make still more difficult the problem of the mill-owners as to how they may dispose of their refuse. It may, however, prove to be a blessing in disguise, by stimulating the mind of some one to invent a method of turning this refuse material to profitable account.

OUR Winnipeg contemporary, *The Commercial*, urges the formation of an association of Manitoba millers. Associations are capable, as our contemporary says, of being made instruments of advantage to their members. We may add to this the opinion, that as sometimes managed, they are worse than useless. To be of service, officers and members must be alive to their own interests, and must be willing to devote some of their time to meeting and discussing with their brother members, matters affecting their welfare as a body and as individuals. A half-hearted meeting two or three times a year will not suffice to maintain an active, efficient organization. A majority of the members must attend the meetings, and all must be prepared to contribute their share towards making them interesting and profitable. It won't do to throw all the work upon two or three pairs of shoulders, or they will soon tire, and the organization will go to pieces. We have known instances wherein members of an association were in the town where a few hours later an important meeting was to be held, but nevertheless refused to wait and take part, but went away home and left others to do the work and look after their interests. Moreover these men lived but a few miles distant. This is the kind of conduct that tends to paralyze an association and ultimately to wreck it. The millers of Manitoba are, as a rule, separated from one another by a considerable distance, which would render it difficult for them to meet together, and though we should like very much to see them form themselves into an association, we should not feel hopeful of the success of the movement unless a greater amount of interest and determination was thrown into it than has characterized some of the undertakings of the kind in the East.

THE Dominion Parliament has at present under consideration the petitions of two Canadian manufacturing firms whose names are familiar to our readers. Messrs. Samuel May & Co., of Toronto, and the G. T. Smith Middlings Purifier Co., of Stratford, for the renewal of patents on the Dodge wood split pulley and the Geo. T. Smith middlings purifier respectively, which, through inadvertance, have been allowed to lapse. In the case of Messrs. May & Co., the request for renewal, accompanied by the necessary fee of \$20, should have been forwarded to Ottawa in March 1889, but by an oversight was not so forwarded until October. In the Smith Company's case, a clerk in sending the fee for the extension of the patent had enclosed only \$10 instead of \$20, and before the requisite sum reached the department the patent had expired. These informalities render necessary the passage of Bills through Parliament restoring the patents. In both instances, the patents are very valuable, hundreds of thousands of dollars being involved. Great hardship will result to both firms should their petitions be refused. Parliament appears to appreciate this fact, but some of the members are averse to opening the door for future petitions by interfering with the provisions of the Patent Act. The matter is receiving the attention of the Minister of Justice, and we trust that some way may be provided out of the difficulty which these firms have got into through no fault of their own, but by carelessness on the part of their agents. Their case will no doubt serve to put the owners of valuable patents on their guard against possible failure to comply with the requirements of the Patent Act.

SHORTLY after the loss of life and property by the flood at Alton, Ont., a few months ago, we pointed out that there were other Canadian towns and villages so situated as to be liable to destruction from a similar cause, and that the Government would do well to make provision for the proper inspection of dams and reservoirs. Our attention has again been called to this matter by action taken recently by the citizens of Port Hope. A mile north of that town is what is known as the Electric Light Pond, a body of water covering more than seventy acres of land. The embankment confining this pond is by some of the townspeople considered to be unsafe. The volume of water is immense, and should the embankment give way, the loss of life and property in the town would be very great. The danger which it is believed threatens the town from this cause, was the subject of consideration at a recent meeting of the council. In view of the spring freshets which may be expected in the near future, the councillors thought some legal action should be taken to prevent a deluge of the town in case the light company's dam breaks away. The opinion was expressed that some action should be taken by the Local Legislature to provide a means of inspection of dams, and a resolution to that effect was passed and forwarded to T. W. Craig, M. P. P., with the request that he propose such legislation being effected. We trust the legislation asked for will be forthcoming, so that nothing approaching to the terrible Johnstown disaster may ever occur in Canada. In the meantime we would suggest to the town council of Port Hope and of any other town or village which believes itself to be in danger from this cause, that they should take immediate steps to ascertain for a certainty whether or not their fears are well-founded. Unless such action be taken, disaster may come before the desired legislation goes into operation.

THE farmers in some localities are still expressing dissatisfaction with the grain tester and the exchange system. At a meeting of farmers held recently at Calamachie, Ont., a committee was appointed to canvas for subscriptions with which to build a farmers' roller mill. This action—the foolishness of which will in due course be revealed—was followed by the adoption of a resolution so long that we cannot find space to print it. In substance it is to the effect that the "millers combination" is discriminating against the farmers by exacting "enormous tolls;" that while the toll is kept out of the best wheat, the farmer never gets any of the higher grades of flour but is generally sent away with a second or inferior grade; that Government should protect the farmer by legislation, declaring him to be entitled to 52 pounds of flour, bran and shorts, and that from good wheat weighing 58 lbs. and upward the farmer shall be entitled to the proper proportion of high grade, and that inasmuch as farmers cannot under the roller system get back the flour from their own grist, it be enacted that they be not allowed to take in for gristing dirty or musty wheat; that all parties wishing to have such wheat gristed must do so by special arrangement." This is the burthen of the farmers' complaint. We might suggest to them a shorter and quicker method of relief than the slow Governmental process under which many of the millers have been waiting so long that they have grown grey-headed. It is to abandon the system of exchange entirely as unbecoming the business age in which we live, and adopt the system of selling their wheat for cash and purchasing their flour for cash at wholesale prices. This is the common sense, business-like method which already prevails in many localities, and which in time will doubtless supersede almost entirely the old-fashioned method adopted to meet the requirements of early Canadian civilization. A prominent milling firm in a west-