

## POSTAL BUSINESS OF ST. JOHN, N.B.

St. John, N.B., shows a remarkable increase in her postal business since 1876, and this notwithstanding the abolition of the rate on newspapers during the last few years. The revenue from stamps and cards increased from \$25,444 in 1876 to \$35,350 in 1884; box rents, etc., fell from \$4,867 to \$2,633, due probably to the free delivery system, yet leaving a total increase of \$7,712. Parcels posted increased during that period from \$4,273 to \$6,890; newspapers from 1,452,022 to 1,938,404; letters and postal cards from 755,556 to 1,286,532; total increase between 1876 and 1884 about one million. The total mail matter received increased from 1,319,449 to 1,881,558; matter passing through from 974,414 to 1,430,582. The number of letters and newspapers delivered by carriers increased from 445,850 to 1,160,334. The number of registered letters received for city delivery increased from 33,063 to 42,612; ditto passing through, from 29,050 to 44,576; ditto posted at St. John, from 14,851 to 21,154. In the money order business there is a slight falling in the amounts paid, owing, it is supposed, to the improved facilities afforded by the banks for all but small remittances. Canadian orders in 1876 amounted to \$501,880; in 1884 to \$471,228; United States orders increased from \$5,718 to \$18,454; foreign from \$3,572 to \$5,666. The amount of money orders issued increased from \$98,765 in 1876 to \$122,758 in 1884. The number of money orders certified at the international exchange office, since its establishment in 1881, increased from 13,271 of the value of \$184,000 to 20,668 of the value of \$272,122 in 1884. The number of dead letters has decreased from 14,090 in 1876 to 9,124 in 1884. In contrast to the increase in other departments it will be observed that the registered letter business (outward) appears to have reached a permanent level, about 20,000 letters per annum being registered at St. John. In 1876, 18 clerks and 8 letter carriers comprised the staff of the St. John post office; the present staff consists of 22 clerks and 12 carriers.

## WINE STATISTICS.

The greatest wine-producing country of the earth is France, which also furnishes the greatest variety and the most sought for wines. The total production of the country has fluctuated greatly in late years, on account of the ravages of the phylloxera. It was nearly 2,246,000,000 gallons, wine measure, in 1875, and less than 689,000,000 gallons in 1879. The average is estimated at 1,456,000,000 gallons. The vine is cultivated in all but nine of the eighty-six departments, but most extensively in the southern departments, that of Henuit leading the list. Italy ranks the second among the wine-lands, with an average production about half that of France, or of 715,000,000 gallons, the total value of which is estimated at a millard of lire. The export trade is growing fast, and has become very large. Spain follows as the third greatest wine-producing State, with 583,000,000 gallons. The southern wines are in greatest demand, and the export trade is assuming enormous dimensions. Next in order is Austria-Hungary, with 371,000,000 gallons, a large part and the choicest of which is produced in Hungary. Portugal is fifth among European wine lands, with 132,000,000 gallons, among which are the famous port wines, forming the basis of a large export trade. Germany, with only a small

part of its land in cultivation for wine, and an annual return of 95,400,000 gallons, does not produce as much as it consumes, but imports from France and Austria-Hungary. Russia produces 53,000,000 gallons, chiefly in the southern provinces, or those bordering on the Black and Caspian Seas. Of the smaller States, Greece produces about 39,750,000 gallons; Switzerland, 30,320,000; European Turkey, 26,000,000; Roumania, 31,800,000; and Servia, 13,350,000. Belgium makes the smallest showing of all the European States that produce any wine. The wine production of the fourteen States enumerated is estimated at 3,577,500,000 gallons a year. Wine is also a very important staple of Asiatic agriculture, and forms a notable item in the crops of all Asiatic Turkey, Palestine, Arabia, Persia, Afghanistan, Bokhara, and parts of India, while in Cochin-China and Japan it is of relatively small account. In Africa it is a considerable item in Algeria and the Cape Colony, and is made in only mentionable quantities in Egypt, Abyssinia, Morocco, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. The wine-culture of the Canary Islands and the Azores has recently suffered greatly from diseases of the vines. The United States produced 23,453,000 gallons of wine in 1880, and it was worth \$16,000,000. More than a quarter of the value of the product came from California. Wine is produced in a primitive way in Mexico, Brazil, the Argentine Republic and Chili. The wine industry has been developed to a considerable importance in Australia, and promises to grow.—*Popular Science Monthly*.

## FASHIONS IN FURS.

Sealskin still holds the position of "leader" and the most fashionable for the manufacture of dolmans, Newmarkets, sacques, cloaks, French wraps, pelerines, muffs, bonnets and toques. The most valuable and finest seals are the South Sea, Alaska, Siberian coast and Shetland. The pelts of fur seals are brought to the market unprepared in casks of brine, and after remaining in pickle a sufficient length of time to render it soft and pliable the pelt is cleared of the long, dark gray hairs by a tedious process, and only the fine, close fur underneath remains untouched. On the fineness and closeness of this second layer depends the value of the skin. There is very little difference in the natural color of the skins, the rich, dark, glossy and the red-brown colors being the work of the dyer. It requires several skins to make a garment, therefore the necessity of using great care in order to have the skins of the same color, as any incongruity would spoil the effect and naturally retard the sale. None but the best skins will take the rich, dark color so much admired and so popular. Quite a number of Pacific coast, Copper Island, and Cape Horn sealskins have been made up and offered for sale, but while they possess all the elegance, so far as appearance is concerned, of the best quality, they are a delusion and a snare, and a little wear is damaging to their beauty and to the feelings of the unfortunate possessors. Sacques, cloaks, ulsters, and walking jackets are familiar to all, but the French wrap, although quite popular in France, is a new candidate for favor in America, and gives promise of becoming very fashionable. It is short in the back, flowing sleeves, and long tabs in front, the trimming being of French black lynx. For trimmings golden beaver, sable, white fox, lynx, and all fine natural furs are very fashionable. Golden beaver is a novelty, and will surely be the rage. As the name indicates, it is of the color of gold, subdued and very rich, adding greatly to the elegant appearance of the garment. Sealskin is the most popular fur for winter pelerines, and the graceful contour is well suited for slim, youthful figures.

The pelerine has a long point at the back, is round in front, and generally edged with beaver. Toques of sealskin, ornamented with the claw of a seal, are very pretty and quite fashionable, while seal muffs are also quite in vogue. Sealskin bonnets have become fashionable, taking the place of sealskin caps and large hats. In the matter of prices the backwardness of the season has naturally been more or less against the trade, and dealers will sell very close. Quotations for sealskin sacques range from \$150 to \$250, Ulsters and Newmarkets \$275 to \$350, and \$400, walking-jackets \$100 to \$150, French wraps \$100 to \$250, and bonnets from \$10 to \$15. Sables are the most costly of all furs, and values vary. Common American skins sell from \$5 to \$20 each, while Russian sables are worth from \$15 to \$200. The average length of the little animal is twelve inches, and the tail six inches, so that it takes an army of skins to make a garment. The Emperor Nicholas of Russia owned a sable pelisse, valued at \$12,000, and a cloak or coat lined with sable is worth a couple of thousand dollars. The tails of the sables make beautiful ornaments for seal or velvet cloaks, but even they are very expensive. Sable capes have not been worn to any great extent of late years, but are now becoming more in favor. Black fox and silver gray fox are also valuable furs, and a portion of the neck of the former skin is used by Russian noblemen to form collars or facings on coats. Six necks are required, making the cost of a collar about \$900. An old saying, as to the revival of fashions still holds good, and the costly and elegant mink is steadily increasing in popularity.

## THE HUDSON BAY CO.

At a recent meeting of this company in London, England, the Governor, Mr. E. Colville, who presided, made some observations as to the North West that may possess some general interest. Apart from the important cargo of furs on board the *Prince of Wales*, supposed to be weather-bound at Moose Factory, which cargo is valued at £40,000, balance insured, there is a satisfactory quantity in the London warehouse. "These will be sold, as usual, in January and March ensuing. The amount of returns is somewhat swollen by the fact that the returns from York Factory, that were frozen in last year, have come to hand. It is very curious and very unusual in our experience to have two consignments from the same place frozen in in consecutive years. Last year's, however, as I have stated, have come safely to hand, and will be offered for sale at the usual time. We have rather an extra quantity of furs belonging to the next outfit. It appears thus that fur-bearing animals are not decreasing and our fur trade is going on well and prosperously. I think we may hope for as good prices as those of last year, though it is impossible for me to say anything definitely as to this; but we think the fur markets look fairly well. There is a large surplus of wheat in Manitoba, and although the price has been low it is of such excellent quality that I hope there will be a fair enough demand to enable the farmers to pay their way, and meet all claims made upon them. It is also, I think, satisfactory to learn that the farmers there are turning their attention to a more mixed method of farming than hitherto. That is, they are growing other crops besides wheat, and are raising stock and sheep. We thought it would be interesting to give you some information with respect to the marvelous progress made by the Canadian Pacific Railway in pursuing their way from the Atlantic to the Pacific. That portion of the line worth of Lake Superior is expected to be completed next spring, and it will have a very material effect on the cost of transport. We have now to send them sometimes to New York, and sometimes to