

countries as "French goods"; fancy boxes and other goods of anti-mony ware, gilt; paper hangings, napkins, fans and parasols, which we already import, but might do more largely; common chinaware, neat and cheap, which he thinks should be a large item, because hitherto only fancy Japan chinaware at fancy prices has been seen here. Lacquered ware, of course, is an old story.

Next, as to the Canadian products which can be sold in Japan. Those mentioned by the Consul off-hand are flour, butter, milk, hops, shoes. The quantity of breadstuffs the Empire imported in 1894 was valued at 11,564,000 yen, equal to about \$7,700,000. This was nearly all flour, and came from California, Washington and Oregon. The import will increase, because, for one thing, the Army and Navy (150,000 and 15,000 men respectively), and the students in the schools are now using what they term "European food," namely, bread and butter; and for another thing, rice culture being expensive and difficult, needing much irrigation, the rice plantations are being turned into tea and mulberry plantations, for the silk industry is growing. As the custom of eating wheaten bread grows the purchase of flour must grow among Japan's 40,000,000 people, for they have never raised much wheat at home, and they never can. "No Canadian flour has ever been sent to Japan yet under the name of Canadian flour," according to Mr. Nosse. Preserved meats and condensed milk find ready market in Japan. There are a million and a quarter of people in the city of Tokio, which is twelve miles in extent in one direction and fifteen in another. "We get our butter from Sweden and America," says the consul, "and much of our milk comes all the way from Switzerland, the remainder from the United States. Surely we should get some of these from you." He added that the rising generation among the more progressive Japanese pride themselves on living upon "European food," instead of the rice and fish which used to be their principal staples.

We have left no room to speak of hops, shoes, or Ontario hardwood lumber as possible articles of export to the Flowery Kingdom. But with respect to these and other articles, any one interested should write to Mr. T. Nosse, consul for Japan, Vancouver. Any one who does so will, we venture to say, receive an intelligent reply. Mr. N. has resided in the United States, and in China and Corea, as well as in his own country, having been for fifteen years in the consular service. He has certainly been an observant student, for his acquaintance with commercial and political affairs is as remarkable as his company is agreeable.

#### A COMING ELECTRIC TOWN.

In these modern days of invention and rapid development, in which electricity is taking such an important part, one is accustomed to hear of rapid changes in various lines of business. Indeed there are businesses in which if you do not change with the times, those who do change to modern methods surpass you in the race and capture the trade, and you are likely to be "left," as the expressive Americanism has it. Places, too, are subject to like influences. Some go backward and fall into decay; others have new life imparted to them by reason of discoveries or by various forms of enterprise. Niagara Falls, N.Y., is one of the latter class; the immense increase in value of property there is an illustration in point. Land adjacent to the town that had in former years only a nominal value as farm land, is, we are told, now rated by the foot and has multiplied in value many times. It may confidently be expected that other places that are blessed with large water powers where electricity can be generated cheaply, will now come to the front either gradually or rapidly as manufacturing centres, and places not heretofore noticed may earn in the near future a name and place in the manufacturing world.

Some towns or villages are especially adapted by nature for such purposes, being so situated with respect to railway communication and access to water power as to make them desirable points from the point of view of economy in manufactures. In this connection a correspondent draws our attention to Eugenia Falls, in the County of Grey, as an Ontario point very favorably situated. Here the water of the Beaver River supplies mills and factories with power, and then descends by the famous Falls of Eugenia, which are noted far and wide as among the handsomest in Ontario. Upon turning to Lovell's Gazetteer of Ontario, it says of this place: "Eugenia, in Grey county, Ontario, is romantically situated on Beaver River, 6½ miles from Flesherton. In the course of a mile the Beaver River falls 334 feet"—which is at the rate of one foot in sixteen—"culminating in this village in a magnificent fall of 70 feet. It gives an unlimited water-power." Consulting Dun's Reference Book, we find that there are at this point sawmills, grist mills, a turning factory, a hoop and veneer works, a sash, door and planing factory, already in existence at that point, driven by water. There is in the background of the view a large bold mountain, covered with forest, which frames with great effect the water dripping in a beautiful sheet over the cliffs to the rocks below, a fall of about 80 feet, and then rushing madly down the gorge.

The water-power of the Beaver River is to be utilized, we hear, by the proposed Huron & Ontario Electric Railway, which is intended to run from Kincardine by way of Walkerton, Durham, Flesherton, Shelburne to Port Perry, with a line from Flesherton north to Eugenia, and on to Meaford and Owen Sound. This will open up the famous valley of the Beaver, noted for its fine fruits. The district is perhaps less noted than it deserves to be for its growth of grain and for the value of its timber.

Enough electric power will be produced at Eugenia, says our informant, to run this entire railway system, and there will be plenty to spare for commercial purposes; the volume of water is good, and the fall an exceptional one of 400 feet in one and a quarter miles. Here in all probability will be erected the mechanical plant, repair shops, car and motor shops of the road; as it lies in the centre of the system, lines are to radiate from it north, west and east. Great quantities of timber of various kinds, birch, beech, maple and elm, are to be had in the vicinity, and, no doubt, will be utilized in manufacturing industries, for when cheap power is produced then do manufactures congregate. It would certainly seem that, having cheap power for manufactures and for making electric light, and having presently an electric railway connecting with both G.T.R. and C.P.R. systems, a great future lies before this hitherto humble village. Strange to say, adds our correspondent, this place was in the early history of Ontario laid out as "The Government Town of Eugenia." It will be more to the purpose, if in the later history of Ontario, it be known as the manufacturing town of Eugenia. We in Canada have by no means made the most of the wonderful water powers distributed over the land.

#### AMERICAN IRON.

The American manufacturers of Bessemer steel have practically finished their sessions, and agreed upon prices of steel billets at various points. The billet pool, so-called, is an assured fact. What its success is to be, what its tenure and how it will affect the trade immediately and remotely concerned, are questions that can be better answered two months hence, says the *Iron Trade Review*. The list of Bessemer plants included in the new arrangement are those of the following companies: Carnegie Steel Co., Ltd., Jones & Laughlins, National Tube Works Co., Hainsworth Steel Co., Shoenberger & Co., Bethlehem Iron Co., Illinois Steel Co., Cleveland Rolling Mill Co., and in addition four concerns in Ohio, five in Pennsylvania, one each in Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana—two dozen in all. The general plan of organization is the one discussed last year. An allotment of tonnage is made, and the details in this respect are to be worked out by the executive committee of four chosen last week.

General Manager Swank, of the American Iron and Steel Association, says of this pool that any arrangement among manufacturers "is justifiable that secures a fair reward for capital and labor, and does not unfairly advance prices. There is no danger that prices will be thus advanced. Our iron and steel manufacturers have never yet taken undue advantage of their customers. It is not for their interests to do this, and they will not do so now, but they ought not to be expected to continue the ruinous policy of giving their products away, and thus inviting additional financial disaster for themselves and others. Better prices for iron and steel will bring better times for everybody. The numerous financial failures among iron and steel manufacturers during the last three years prove that the prices of iron and steel, with the exception of the short-lived boom of last summer, have been too low to be profitable to capital and to insure good wages to labor."

Andrew Carnegie's opinion on the same subject is this: "I don't think that it will amount to much. In times of depression and stagnation, people are disposed to get together and agree to suspend the law of competition; but no permanent results follow. I never believe in combinations. They are only for weak people. They give a little temporary strength to these weak persons, but they are not good for the strong and healthy. \* \* \* Business is not good. A general depression prevails, and I think we must get the Presidential election over before we can hope for general prosperity."

We observe that the *Philadelphia Times* warns the parties to this combination that they may be too greedy, predicting that the attempt to raise steel prices to \$22 and over will lead to sharp British competition, because the British makers can pay the duty and "flood the market" at \$20. That journal is informed that steel brings an exceptional net profit at \$20 a ton. "It affords a fair business return at \$18, as the cost of manufacture at Pittsburgh, where labor is better paid than at any other point, is \$12.50 to \$13," and to attempt to raise prices arbitrarily will result in disaster and the ultimate closing of the mills.

—The Board of Trade of Richmond, Que., is agitating for the adoption of permanent sidewalks by the town council of that place.