

BUSINESS NOTES.

The people of Aylmer, Ontario, by a vote of a hundred and thirty-four to ten, have resolved to lend Mr. William Yates ten thousand dollars to build a foundry that will give employment to fifty men. The past year's work at the anthracite coal mines of Pennsylvania was the largest on record, the shipments aggregating twenty-nine and a half million tons, nearly one million more than those of the previous year. All differences between shoe manufacturers and their employees, in Cincinnati, Ohio, have been amicably settled for the next six months by arbitration. There is great destitution in Camden, New Jersey, owing to the large number of persons out of work, and thousands of dollars already expended have not afforded all the relief required. The closing of the extensive nickel works of Joseph Wharton at the end of the year will add to the distress. Building operations in Chicago, Illinois, last year exceeded any previous one except that after the great fire. If the new buildings were placed in a line, their combined frontage would extend fourteen miles, and the entire cost of them is estimated at twenty million dollars, while the suburban towns show an equal growth. In New York nearly forty-five millions have been expended in new buildings during the year, an increase of one million dollars over the previous year. The taxable property of Toronto, Ontario, has increased during the past year by four million dollars, nine hundred buildings having been erected, of an aggregate value of two millions, to which half a million may be added for growth of the suburbs. Excitements are still common in oil speculations at Bradford, Pennsylvania, and the supply of victims is likely to last as long as that of the oil. James Smyth & Co., manufacturers of gingham and cotton goods—Philadelphia, have suspended, owing to an extension of their business beyond the range of their capital; but it is supposed the creditors will permit the firm to continue its business, amounting as it does to eight hundred thousand dollars a year and employing over nine hundred hands. Theo. Weston, architect, with liabilities of a hundred and seventy thousand dollars, and Adams & Son, hardware, liabilities fifteen thousand, both of New York, have assigned. Several large manufacturing establishments in Chester, Pennsylvania, have closed on account of depression in trade, and many men are thereby deprived of employment. The Women's Co-operative Dress Association, New York, which failed lately, had liabilities of one hundred and twenty-five thousand, covered about double by assets. The Second National Bank, Jefferson, Ohio, has been driven into liquidation by defalcations of about fifty thousand dollars made by the cashier and assistants. Depositors will be paid in full, and stockholders get about half the amount of their stock. The incorporation in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, is announced of the Clearfield Bituminous Coal Company, to mine and deal coal, iron and fire clay, and make and sell coke; the capital is five million dollars and the Vanderbilts, with other wealthy capitalists, are among the stockholders. The extensive oil mills of Messrs. Douglas, Stewart & Forrest, situated in several places in the North-West States and using an aggregate of twenty thousand bushels a day, have closed to await oats becoming cheaper than at present. Lenan, Hanaburger & Co., dealers in fancy goods at wholesale, Toronto, have failed with debts of about one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. John R. Cummings, contractor and builder, New York, has assigned, his liabilities being two hundred and fifty

thousand with a good deal less than one thousand of assets. The Western Nails Association has unanimously decided to close up all factories with the object of showing buyers, who have lately been holding back, that the makers can control the supply when nails are most wanted. General trade throughout the continent is represented by reports as having been dull the last week of the old year, the reason given being that stock-taking is going on and many commercial travellers have been called in to assist in that work. The year's business in general has been very good, and a better feeling in the iron trade is a good symptom for the new year. The failures reported in the United States last week numbered two hundred and forty-two, six more than in the corresponding week last year. There were seventeen failures in Canada, nine less than during the previous week.

THE WEEK.

NEW YEAR'S DAY was happily marked in New York this year by a notable decrease in drinking.

MR. PAUL TULANE, of Princeton, New Jersey, who has already given half a million to found a college in New Orleans, offers another half million on condition that the State exempt the institution from taxation.

A PREDICTION of a Mr. Wiggins, a Government employee in Ottawa, a student of astronomy, of a fearful ocean and land storm to take place on the ninth of next March, is attracting attention all over the world.

THE HON. E. ALLAN, the Minister to the United States from the Hawaiian kingdom, after being presented to the President in Washington on New Year's Day and while on his way to an ante-room, was seized with an attack of vertigo, succeeded by spasms. He was promptly attended to by physicians, but shortly afterward died in one of the ante-rooms. At the Executive Mansion, upon the announcement of Mr. Allan's death, the receptions ended.

PERMISSION has been refused in New York to a theatrical manager to produce what is called the Passion Play—a representation of the trial and crucifixion of our Lord—in that city. The play is annually performed by the simple people of an obscure mountain village of Switzerland, but with every mark of devoutness and reverence, which, though few enlightened Christians might defend it even under such circumstances, is vastly different from travesty of the immortal tragedy for the amusement of unspiritual play-goers of New York or any other large city.

EARTHQUAKES AND METEORIC PHENOMENA are becoming aboundingly frequent. Several shocks of earthquakes have lately been felt in different parts of North-Eastern America, the latest being a pretty severe one that shook some towns in Nova Scotia. A strange experience is reported by the bark "Gamsbok" lately arrived in New York from Auckland, New Zealand. In a snow squall, a bad fire passed over the ship, injuring Olsen, the mate, in the wrists, Blumberg, at the wheel, in both legs, and Makella in the head, breaking both gunwales and ripping the planks, exploded twenty yards from the ship with a loud report and sparks flying. There was no lightning or thunder at the time. A fiery meteor accompanied by the report of an explosion lately appeared within view of the streets of Montreal at early morn.

TWO OF THE United States navy yards are to be closed—probably those at Portsmouth and Philadelphia.

HERE MOST, a notorious Socialist and insignificant but noxious character from Europe has been in America a few days, during which time he has addressed howling mobs in incendiary and murderous speeches, advising them to murder the wealthy classes, and help themselves to the contents of banks and stores, and set men of wealth to work on the streets.

IS SAID that of the eight million dollars paid for carrying the United States mails since 1870, five million eight hundred thousand have been earned by English steamship companies and only two million by American. The English commercial navy, growing naturally under freedom of trade, thus snatches the major part of the ocean mail subsidies of the United States from the latter's own navy protected by restrictive taxation.

THE INDIAN agent at Fort Peck, Montana, describes a state of affairs very creditable to the white people of that quarter. He says Milk River country is overrun with white hunters, who are slaughtering buffalo by the thousand. The Assiniboin and Yanktonais Sioux are becoming restless in consequence of the destruction of their game. The Indian police are without arms, and useless. The agent asks that the military be requested to expel the whites. The Indian Commissioner will request the Secretary of War to have them removed.

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT has undertaken to settle a difficulty among the Creek Indians in Indian Territory—according to report none too soon. The alleged origin of the trouble is that the Creeks divided their support between the two sides during the Southern rebellion, and though uniting as a people after the war they retained their difference in sympathies to the extent of forming them into two distinct parties, that have formed the contesting sides in all elections among the people. The Southern sympathizers number some seven hundred, the Northern only four hundred. Though hostile, the two parties have lived together, their houses intermingling, which makes the situation more serious. The partisan strivings of those Indians had, when the Government decided to interfere, become developed to the point of open warfare, in the event of which the houses would be emptied and the two parties would organize into separate armies for a desperate and doubtless bloody and cruel war.

THE RAILWAY BUILDING done in the United States in the year 1881 was mentioned about this time last year in these columns as something astounding. The estimated figures for 1882, however, show still more remarkable extension of the iron highways. It is computed in Chicago that eleven thousand miles of railway track have been laid during 1882 on three hundred and sixteen lines, in forty-four states and territories. This is fifteen hundred more than the construction in 1881, the former year, up to that time. The highest number of miles constructed in one single State was nine hundred and fifty-three in Iowa; Texas is next, eight hundred and seventeen, and New York is the third in the list, seven hundred and fifty-two; one hundred and forty of the above lines are still uncompleted. The capital invested during the year is estimated at two hundred and seventy million dollars (\$270,000,000) exclusive of sums expended in the preparation of the road beds on which the track is not yet laid.

DO NOT FORGET to renew your subscriptions, and try and get others for the *Weekly Messenger*—fifty cents a year; forty cents when five or more are ordered at once—which begins its second year with five thousand seven hundred subscribers. Address all orders, JOHN DOUGGALL & SON, Montreal, Canada.

GOVERNOR STANFORD, of California, is said to have offered to make an experiment in colonization of a novel and in some respects commendable nature. He would buy all the real estate and improvements in the town of Vina, Tehama county in that State, for a nominal sum—say one dollar—and immediately sell and reconvey the same property to the owner, providing that he is allowed to insert a clause in his deeds that no intoxicating liquors shall ever be sold in the town of Vina. Next he would bind himself to build a fine two-story school-house large enough to accommodate all the children of the town. He would further agree to import one hundred German families to work his extensive vineyard and orchard, and will exclude from his premises all Chinese labor.

A NEW USE FOR ELECTRICITY.

Among the various uses to which electricity may be put there is one of a very practical nature, which promises to effect a great saving of property and life. It consists of an arrangement for the immediate stoppage of a steam engine by merely pressing a button similar to those by which electric bells or fire alarms are sounded. This button may be placed at any distance from the engine upon which it acts; and Mr. Tate, the inventor, proposes that a number of such buttons should be dispersed throughout the factory or elsewhere where the apparatus is in use. In factories accidents occur almost daily through the impossibility of stopping machinery on the instant. Such accidents will be readily avoided by this method of instantaneously stopping the engine from any part of the building in which it works. The principle of the contrivance depends on the action of an electro-magnet upon the stop valve of the engine.

CANNED POISON.

Canned fruits, vegetables, meats, fish, soup, even canned puddings, are now not uncommon articles of diet, and we believe the introduction of these alimentary substances has been, upon the whole, a great benefit to the people; for fruit, vegetables, and meat even, that at one season of the year would go to waste through the plenty that made them superfluous, are by the canning system economized for use in other seasons. But it is certain that several articles now put in tins should be put up in glass or earthenware to make them safe articles of diet. All substances that contain acids capable of attacking the solder of tin of the cans combine with these metals to make poisonous compounds, and may cause illness and even death. One case of death was reported in the *Herald* yesterday. We believe that the Board of Health should stop the sale of all tomatoes, rutabars or other acid fruits or vegetables put up in tin cans. —*New York Herald.*

MR. JACOB REES is credited with having expressed the belief that if it were possible to produce a flameless combustion the intensity and quantity of heat obtained from a given amount of fuel would be greatly increased thereby. Mr. Thomas Fletcher of Warrington, England, has succeeded in producing a composition without flame, and lately given at Owen's college a striking practical illustration of Mr. Rees's theory. He directed the flame of a simple gas blow-pipe upon a three-inch ball of iron for a few seconds and then blew out the flame. The heat rapidly increased and the wire quickly melted and ran into drops. He even succeeded in fusing refractory fire clay, the intensity of heat being much greater than ever before obtained with the fuel used. Even in the dark the burning of the gas was shown to be entirely invisible. It appears that flame really indicates an imperfect combustion.