

The San Antonio (Texas) *Herald* claims that the crop in the old cotton counties, where freedmen cultivate the soil, has fallen off to a tremendous extent. It says further that while the cotton crop in the cotton-belt counties has been thus nearly destroyed under negro labor, on the lands of western Texas a bale to the acre is almost a certain yield.

The Chicago *Times* chronicles the fall of an enormous aerolite in the vicinity of Farmersville, Livingston county, Mo. The shock of its impact with the ground is stated to have been like an earthquake, and the molten mass is described as fully twenty feet high above the soil, and some twenty-five feet in diameter. It presents the usual appearance of such bodies, being a black shining mass of meteoric iron.

Notwithstanding the keen competition of the American factories, which have had the experience of many years, Canadian cheese is growing rapidly into public favor in England. In recent articles the *Pull Mall Gazette* and the *Grocer*, the latter a special organ of the trade, have referred to the excellencies of the Canadian product, comparing it favourably with American.

A member of the Saginaw county bar, says the Detroit *Journal of Commerce*, was recently in one of our thriving interior towns on professional business. In the office of the hotel he was accosted by a very agreeable gentleman, evidently of the *gens* drummer, who wanted to know "where he was from." The legal gentleman not exactly relishing the stranger's familiarity, answered shortly, "From Detroit." The next question was, "For what house are you traveling?" "For my own." "You are? May I ask your name?" "You may." Pause—enjoyable to the lawyer, embarrassing to the other. "Well, (desperately) what is your name?" "Jones." "What line are you in?" "I don't understand you, sir." "What are you selling?" (impudently). "Brains." (coolly). The drummer saw his opportunity, and looking at the other from head to foot, he said slowly, "Well, you appear to carry a very small line of samples." Blackstone says he owes that drummer one.

A NEW COAL ENTERPRISE.—The extensive coal areas of Broad Cove, Inverness County, now held under lease by the Rev. H. E. Ross, Judge McCully, Hiram Blanchard, Esq., and others, is soon to be developed into another live coal centre. The area embraces some five seams varying from three feet to seven. Mr. Robb considers that the quantity of 26,000,000 tons of coal is contained in this area, and that if worked under the sea for half a mile from the shore 34,000,000 tons additional can be obtained. The quantity of the coal is highly spoken of, it is bituminous and is of excellent quality and apparently free from sulphur. The development of this mining property has been retarded by the want of a suitable port of shipment. To obviate this a bill last winter passed the Nova Scotia Legislature to incorporate the "Inverness Railway Company" which has in view the construction of a railroad from Broad Cove to the Strait of Canso, a distance of 50 miles. This road, it is urged, and we believe it is true, will pass through some of the most fertile portions of Cape Breton. The country is a rich agricultural district, while timber, iron ore, and oil from Lake Ainslie will heap up the freightage that must come over the road. The people of Inverness are so anxious for the road that they have offered a right of way free of expense together with sleepers and timbers. The County of Richmond has made a similar offer. We hope the Company engaged in the enterprise may be successful in rapidly completing the road.—*North Sydney Herald*.

THE CROPS.—The Missouri papers convey the gratifying intelligence that the crops are unusually promising in that State. The Springfield *Patriot* estimates that there are 25,000 acres of wheat in its county, which will turn out 15 bushels per acre, yielding a total of 370,000 bushels, of which 200,000 bushels will be for export. This may be taken as an average of the way in which our many exchanges generally speak, all of them declaring that there will be a larger yield of wheat in the State than was ever known before; and, what is more, the grain is plump, full and hard, showing that the quality is as satisfactory as the quantity. The growing crop is coming on finely. Equally cheering reports are made of the crops in Pennsylvania. The hay crop, now being harvested, is unusually large. Corn, potatoes, and fruits of all kinds promise an abundant yield, and the State papers "look for one of the largest crops ever known."

A NOTE OF ALARM.

In a significant editorial article in the London *Daily News* recently, the writer said:—

"A 'first warning' of great significance is given to all Englishmen in the figures of our return for May. Masters and workmen may be more directly concerned, but there is no person resident in these islands or deriving his income from a national source who will not find it his business to look the facts in the face and to take note of the new characteristics. The tide of prosperity—of increasing trade, of augmented profits—that has flowed so steadily for years, and that of late rolled in upon us with vast volume and accelerated speed, has at length begun to ebb. We have received our final check. There have been former occasions, no doubt, when financial panic or monetary derangements have thrown us suddenly back; but without any such startling or obvious cause the trade of the United Kingdom now exhibits a serious decline. In the first five months of 1873 we exported produce to the extent of one hundred and six millions; while in the corresponding period of 1874 our exports amounted only to ninety-eight millions. Nor is the decline for twelve months only. We have fallen one million below the total for the same months of 1872. Bearing in mind the constant tendency of our trade for many years to increase—sometimes 'by leaps and bounds'—we should consider that standing still for two years was in itself something significant and 'un-English.' We have not, however, experience: a moderate misfortune of that kind; we are actually going back. With an increased population we have a diminished trade.

"The details of the decrease do not supply any consolation. Our exports of cotton manufactures have fallen off in value, since 1873, from twenty-six to twenty-four millions, our coal from five millions to four, our hardware from two millions to a million and three-quarters, our iron and steel manufactures from fifteen millions to twelve, and our woollen and worsted articles from eleven millions to nine. These statistics entirely relate to the first five months of each year. We have named the larger items, but the decrease is general, and extends to nearly every section of the export trade in our own productions. The world appears to want less of almost everything we make. We still continue to sell largely, and even in augmented proportions, some articles of raw material produced by ourselves or brought by us from abroad and re-exported. Thus the exports of raw cotton, of railroad iron, of unwrought leather, or unwrought tin, have all slightly increased—while as a natural corollary there has been during the two years a slight though distinct advance in the export of engines and mill-work. When foreign countries buy from us less manufactured goods, excepting machinery for factories of their own, and more raw material, the inference is plain. He who runs may read: we are losing some of our most valuable customers. In 'The Critic,' one dramatic author whispers into another's ear the horrible information that the manager 'writes himself' and our manufactures may contemplate with equal dismay the tidings that some of the nations which bought most largely from us in the past, helping us to pay the high wages of our workmen, are now beginning to make their own goods.

A local journal—the *Banner*—estimates the wool receipts of Chatham, Ont., this year at 150,000 to 160,000 pounds—125,000 had already been received. The price there has ranged from 39 to 41c.

Arkansas planters across the Mississippi west of Memphis, say that this last flood deposited over the cotton fields the richest, thickest layer of alluvium ever before brought down from the Western mountains. It is a quarter of an inch in thickness, and full of lime. Crops stimulated by such forces of fecundity grow and mature with extraordinary rapidity, and only vigorous energy in repressing weeds and grass is required through the first few weeks of summer to assure the production, with a favorable season, of an extraordinary cotton crop.—*Trade Journal*.

THE LARGEST LOCOMOTIVE IN THE WORLD.—A correspondent states that the largest locomotive in the world is the "Pennsylvania," on the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. The principal dimensions of this engine are as follows: Diameter of cylinders, 20 inches; length of stroke, 26 inches; number of driving wheels, 12; diameter of drivers, 4 feet; and the weight of the engine alone is 60 tons.

MISTAKEN MISSIONS.

There is a class of men who never succeed in business. With a fair amount of earnest industry they are still unable to get on. Bad luck seems to be their fate, and they are perpetually railing at fortune. In this they are not without sympathy. There are hundreds of simple, good-hearted people who regard them as ill-starred mortals, against whom an inscrutable destiny has set itself, and who are always ready to pity their mischances and to help them in their last extremity.

Now, we are not believers in the astrological theory as applied to men's reverses in this world. We do not think that what are called "skiey influences" have anything whatever to do with the ups and downs of life. On the contrary, we have always considered that a very foolish philosophy which refers the prosperity or misfortunes of individuals to preternatural causes, or, in fact, to natural causes entirely foreign to themselves.

Some persons, it is true, owe a great deal to accident. Much of their success is due to circumstances, not of their making. So it is with others who suffer disappointment and disaster. But in those cases in which failure or the reverse is certainly dependent on no extraneous agencies, but, in the main, on one's own means and energies, we are confident that no little of the complaint of our hard lot is misdirected, and that the charity which helps us out of our successive difficulties is misplaced. In plain words, our failures in this and that thing are too often attributable to the fact that we engage in enterprises beyond our powers.

The world is filled with examples of this truth. We see hundreds of men, in all professions and callings, who never achieve even a decent living. The bar of every city is crowded with them. They swell the ranks of our physicians and theologians, and swarm in the walks of science and literature—in short, they run against and elbow us everywhere.

They are the miserable, deluded creatures, who have mistaken their mission here below. They are always attempting tasks which they have not the first qualification to perform. Their ambition is forever outrunning their capacities. They fancy that to call themselves lawyers, doctors and the like, is to be what they are styled. Their signs are stuck thickly on doors and shutters all over the town, but they are without honor or employment. Of course they never prosper. They have no fitness for their vocation—no practical skill, no natural talent, no scientific intelligence—and hence they fail.

They and so on are losers by this. There is so much real ability for something that is useful sunk and wasted. The community is encumbered with a host of very bad, very incapable barristers, preachers, physicians, writers, merchants and so forth, and is deprived of just as many very good mechanics and laborers.

It is a pity that men will not be content to choose their pursuits according to their abilities. To encourage them to persist in any business for which they are not suited, and in which they can never attain credit or fortune, is really unkind. It would be much less cruel to let them reap the bitter fruit of their folly until they are literally starved out of a calling for which they are unfit, and into one for which nature may have given them the requisite aptitude and powers.

NATIONAL DEBTS.—Nearly every nation in the world is either a borrower or a lender, and the startling declaration is made by a writer in the London *Daily Telegraph* that the world 'regarded in the mass, is living beyond its means.' During the 10 years ending with 1872, while England reduced her debt \$175,000,000, Holland about \$30,000,000, and the United States \$400,000,000, in five years there was an increase, in some cases exceedingly large, in the debts of France, Italy, Spain, Russia, Turkey, Austro-Hungary, Egypt, Brazil, Portugal and Peru, to say nothing of other nations which are comparatively small debtors. France has gone deepest, increasing her liabilities by about \$2,500,000,000 in the decade. The editor of 'Fenn on the Funds,' a well known book of reference in England, estimates the total increase in the aggregate of national debts for the years from 1862 to 1872, at nearly \$10,000,000,000, while an additional sum of \$5,000,000,000 is estimated to have been raised for joint stock companies. The figures necessary to express the total volume of the world's indebtedness, public and private, would represent a sum almost incomprehensible.

—*Republic Magazine*.