

OUR CANALS.

OUR attention, has been called to this subject by a book recently published in Toronto, entitled "Canadian Canals," by W. Kingsford, C. E. This little work contains a great deal of very valuable information, and we have no doubt that on any subject connected with our present canals, their cost, construction, etc., it is sufficiently reliable. But when its author stepped from the field of the Civil Engineer to that of the Economist, he left that which he appears to have well understood, for that of which he had very immature ideas. The St. Lawrence Canals, which he proposes to enlarge, that every port on the lakes may become an exporting city, are already large enough for the trade of that part of Upper Canada, and will be so for years. The idea that sea-going vessels would ever be induced to go so far inland as the Upper Lakes, is long ago exploded, and is one, for the experiment of trying which, twelve million dollars (the cost of deepening the St. Lawrence Canals) would be rather expensive. Or, supposing that such was the case, and that Toronto had become a sea shipping port, it could not then handle any more grain than it does at present, it could only directly export that which it now ships in propellers and schooners to better markets for ocean freight than Toronto could possibly be, with its very limited grain market. Whereas, by the same improvements by which Toronto would become a direct exporter, Chicago would become the same, and Canada would lose the freighting of the millions of bushels of grain which it might have by making the Ottawa Canal, as we will afterwards show. But why carry this argument any further? The fact is patent to any person, that even a lake schooner will not take to canal navigation; and how can any person believe for a moment that costly, sea-rigged ships are going to waste their time in tedious canal and river navigation? Schooners loading in Chicago for this city invariably discharge their cargo at the foot of lake navigation (Kingston) into barges, in which they come through the river and canals to this city—the cost of a barge carrying the same quantity being only one-third that of a lake schooner, and can be worked much more cheaply; whereas the cost of transshipment is only about 3 cent per bushel, besides which the grain is benefited to more than that value—a fact which our author seems to doubt. But any person must indeed have a small knowledge of the grain trade, who is under that impression, and who argues that because grain goes from Montreal to Britain without damage, it could also do so, without transshipment, from Chicago to Britain. Grain does not go from Montreal across the ocean without damage. A great deal of the grain shipped from this port is damaged considerably by heating before reaching its destination. Neither can grain be shipped from Chicago to Kingston without risk of heating, nor can it lie in a perfectly dry warehouse during the summer months in this city without heating, unless attended to.

We are far from thinking that, because the St. Lawrence Canals do not pay interest on the capital employed in their construction, they are therefore a failure. The principle is universally adopted, that works may confer advantages on a country greatly superior to their cost, and still be in themselves unremunerative. This principle has been so frequently acted upon in the United States, that no company proposing to build a railroad through any undeveloped state, would think of commencing it without a large grant of land from the General Government; and that Government has admitted the principle by granting land in such cases, to replace to the company any capital which they have expended more than that of which the probable revenue would represent the interest.

The space at our disposal this week will not permit us to give this matter the careful consideration it deserves, but in our next issue we will resume the consideration by pointing out, as clearly as we are able, the relative merits of the existing Canal routes, the inadequacy of the whole as compared with the vast and increasing produce of the West, and make a few suggestions respecting some improvements which, if carried out, would be a permanent source of real profit to the whole of the province.

* CANADIAN CANALS.—Messrs. ROLLO & ADAM, Toronto.

Boots and shoes.

No change to note, except that business has been rather quiet this week.

Soap and Candles.

Market unchanged. Candles dull, the demand for soap more active.

THE DRY GOODS TRADE.

Bankage, Beck & Co.
Wm. Benjamin & Co.
John Dupont & Co.
Gibson, White & Co.
Lewis, Kay & Co.
Thomas May & Co.
Munderloh & Steencken.
Ogden & Co.
Rensland, Evans & Co.
A. Roberts & Co.
Stirling, McAll & Co.
William Stephen & Co.
Thomas Claxton & Co.
Alexander Walker.
George Winks & Co.

A CONSIDERABLE quantity of goods has changed hands during the past fortnight, and our branch of business, for this season of the year, has been more than usually active. Several fair parcels have been sold to wholesale buyers from Western Canada. Orders from the country, through commercial travellers, have also been coming forward freely. The positive demands for goods for sorting-up purposes is telling favorably on our market, and stocks promise to be much lower than was at one time anticipated. The close of the season will find stocks in a healthy condition. Payments are decidedly better, and the large amount of purchase money for Wool crop, now being gathered, will tend to help us materially in a financial point of view. The past week has been noted for Trade Sales, at one of which especially a large quantity of goods was sold. The catalogue embraced almost every description of dry goods, a large quantity being sold in package. The sale was attended by the largest buyers of this and other markets. The average prices obtained, taking present sterling cost, were good. Some few lines were sacrificed, as is generally the case, the bulk of the goods, however, brought prices quite equal to their value. The loss to the seller must have been heavy, prices having declined in the home market fully twenty-five per cent on most of the lines sold.

A few more of these sales will clear our market of the accumulated rubbish of the past three years—the sooner the better. There are some lines yet in the market on which the first loss would be the best, and which the improved quality of goods for next season will render impossible to sell at any price. For that class of goods we recommend a few more trade sales. The great mistake was, in the first instance, to import them, and the next greatest would be to hold with the anticipation of realizing profit.

Since our last, several of the buyers from this market have left for Europe, others are shortly to follow. The impression abroad is that the purchases will be light for the coming season. The experience of the past twelve months has taught us a severe lesson—a lesson which will, no doubt, prove beneficial in the end. Checks at times are salutary, and the most far-seeing are at times impressed through the failure of their most careful calculations—that is, when they fall short of real disaster—circumstances from which, we may thankfully add, we are free. If the same care is only continued in the coming six months which has been exercised during the past all will be well. The Wool crop of the country, for which a high price will be paid, and the prospect of a bountiful harvest, is all in our favour, and it is no stretch of the imagination to suppose that there are bright things in store for us—that we are about to enter on a progress which shall be real, and which of late we had hardly hoped for or anticipated.

The Wool crop will be a large one. Last season it was estimated at six million pounds weight. This season it is estimated that this will be exceeded nearly a third. From good authority we gather that the average price will not be less than forty cents. Prices have started, at some points, at forty cents, and show an upward tendency. This price, if it could be avoided, is much too high for successful local manufacture, and our manufacturers are quite at their wits' end to know how to act. Some promise to close their mills altogether, finding it impossible to get a remunerative price for goods made from Wool at above figures. Others who had made contracts for the delivery of goods, having made their calculations on Wool at a lower price, are compelled to withdraw those contracts. The high price is forced on us by the demands from the United States, a large number of buyers from that quarter being at present in the market. It is stated that the United States will require every pound of Canadian Wool they can obtain. These facts rather upset the calculations of those who argued the price of Canadian Wools could not be sustained after the close of the war. These views were based on the supposition that our Wool was used for the manufacture of material for army purposes, and of which not one pound was so required. The Americans use our Wools for the manufacture of the finest class of goods, such as Colognes, Lustrés, &c.—in fact all of that class we style Bradford goods. There are a number of establishments for the manufacture of the above class in the United States exceeding in magnitude some of the largest manufactories of Britain. New Wool cannot be used in the manufacture of these goods, nor in any class, successfully, consequently large stocks have to be held in advance of consumption. The prospect of the repeal of the Reciprocity Treaty—or, at least, its revision, which will possibly include an import duty on Wool, will have a tendency to make Americans buy freely this season, and, consequently, make us pay pretty dearly for an article of our own growth, and of which a large quantity is required for our own consumption.

Imported Woollens show no prospect of being lower. Canadian Woollens must be higher, consequently holders of the above class of stock, in this market, are firm, and show no disposition to give way in prices.

In Cotton goods of desirable brands, in Grey Domestic and Whites, the market is bare, and prices are well sustained. Stiffened goods of above class are in no demand, and will scarcely realize currency for sterling prices. A few lines of this class are in the market, and holders are willing to sacrifice to clear lots. No more are likely to be imported. There are now three mills producing Grey Cottons in this country—one in Montreal; also at Thorold and Dundas. We have seen samples of Cottons manufactured here. It is certainly a creditable article, and if it can continue to be made at price now asked, will, we think,

defy competition. The Thorold Cotton has been sold freely, but without profit to holders. Dundas Cottons are expected in the market shortly, none having yet been offered. The manufacturers of the same promise an article equal, if not superior in value, to anything yet offered. Cotton Yarns are now being much asked for. The Dundas Mills is the only brand in the market, of home manufacture, at present; it sold freely last season, and gave good satisfaction, being much superior to imported.

THE GROCERY TRADE.

James Austin & Co.
I. Buchanan, Harris & Co.
Bacon, Clarke & Co.
H. Chapman & Co.
Converse, Olson & Lamb
Jas. Douglas & Co.
Forster, McRae & Co.
Pittsford & Moore
Alex. T. Rugar
Gibson, Moffatt & Co.
B. Hutchins
Jeffery, Brothers & Co.
Kingsen & Kinloch
Law, Young & Co.
Leeming & Buchanan
E. Matland, Tyne & Co.
J. A. & H. Matheson
H. J. Gear
Mitchell, Kinross & Co.
William Silva & Co.
Rimmer, Gunn & Co.
Robertson & Beattie
David Robertson
Gibson, Moffatt & Co.
Sinclair, Jack & Co.
Jas. Tiffin & Sons
David Torrance & Co.
Thompson, Murray & Co.
Winn & Holland.

Since our last report considerable activity has existed in the market, and a decided improvement in demand is visible. A few large buyers from Western Canada have been in the market, and some good round lots of Teas and Tobaccos have been purchased and sent forward, in execution of Spring orders. General Groceries are also in more request, and, with rapid arrivals of goods by the spring fleet, stocks will shortly be complete. We notice numerous public sales of groceries advertised for the present and coming month. The Trade Sale of Teas, cargo of the "Eastern Chief," advertised for the 6th June, no doubt, will bring a great number of buyers to market; and until then we cannot expect the bulk of the season's business to be done. The sale of Teas named will, we anticipate, in a measure establish the ruling figures for the season.

TEAS.—We report stocks in fair supply, and demand somewhat active. Several lots of various grades of Young Hysons have been picked up within the last week for Western Canada, and jobbers here have operated more freely in supplying their wants. The activity in the New York market, and shipments from here to that point have ceased. We notice that the temporary advance in this market of fine Moyuna Young Hysons mentioned in our last (caused by the active demand in New York), is not sustained, and holders are selling at former rates. Gunpowders and Imperials are in limited demand, and stocks on offer moderately assorted. Coloured Japans are in better supply, and demand fair. Uncoloured Japans are in full supply, and considerable lots have changed hands and gone into consumption, within the last fortnight. Prices of desirable lines (although firmer and advanced in England) we report unchanged here. Blacks—limited purchases for consumption. We observe the arrival in port of the "Princess of Wales," with direct cargo of Teas.

COFFEES.—We notice the arrival of several shipments within the last few days, amounting in all to about 700 hhds. We cannot report much demand from the West. Some lots have been purchased by city jobbers, but there is no activity in this staple. We quote Cuba 9½ to 10, Porto Rico 8½ to 9½.

COFFEE DUTY. Stocks are light and demand limited. We do not alter quotations.

TOBACCO.—Without change. Some lots have, within the week, been sold for the West, but very few operations have taken place among jobbers here, no speculative demand existing. We hear that, in Western Canada, manufacturers are working up Canada Leaf into 10s and 4 lbs. plugs, with wrapper of same. We should be glad if our soil was found to produce a substitute for the American Leaf, of which the great bulk of the duty paid stock held in this market is made; but we fear experience has shown that our own growth is not suitable, in many respects, for the manufacture of Plug.

MOLASSES.—Few sales at former quotations. Stocks ample for present wants.

RICE.—Inactive, and without change, holders are firm at quotations.

FRUIT.—Raisins still scarce in the market; demand limited, and only small lots have been placed for immediate consumption.

CURRENTS in fair supply, and sales light.

SALT dull, one of the spring cargoes has arrived in market and been put in store.

WINES AND LIQUORS in moderate request.

Wool.

We quote from J. L. Bowes & Bros. Liverpool Circular of the 6th inst.—"The inactive feeling which has hung about our market during the last few months has at length been replaced by a cheerful tone, and this week a considerable business has been done in 'low' wools, to which the present remarks more particularly refer. Prices are firmer, and in exceptional cases higher; but the improvement is more apparent in demand than value. Though consumption has been lessened for some time past, and manufacturers have run their stocks low, there has been no undue accumulation in importers' hands, excepting of inferior dirty Levant kinds, and the stock of desirable Wool is small."

CANADA WOOL.—During the next two weeks a large proportion of the clip will be coming into the market. Sales have been made to some extent in London, C. W., at forty cents and over. There is not, as yet, so much competition among the buyers as was experienced last year, prices having then run up rapidly from the opening figures—40 to 42 cents—to 48 to 49 cents; but, with an improved feeling for wool of this class in foreign markets, it is probable that there will be rather an advance in prices.

We shall, during the active season, give weekly reports of transactions in the trade.