

AN AMBITIOUS AND ENTERPRISING COUNTRY.

These are the terms in which Canada is mentioned by Hubert Howe Bancroft's beautiful publication, *The Book of the Fair*, Parts V. and VI. of which are just issued. In the ninth chapter the description of foreign manufactures at the Chicago Fair is begun by reference to the 500,000 square feet allotted to Great Britain and her dependencies, of which the Mother Country appropriated three-fifths. After some pages filled with a description of the English porcelain and chinaware, Doulton and Worcester, Wedgewood and Minton, as well as of the gold and silverware, furniture and textile fabrics of the Mother Country, adorned with a dozen of the most admirable illustrations, Canada comes in for notice. On page 185 is a picture entitled "A Canadian Mantel," and on the next page is a large illustration of the Canadian section as seen from the central avenue.

This illustration shows W. E. Sanford's exhibit, likewise the exhibit of the Corticelli Silk Works (the Brainerd & Armstrong Company), for which a diploma was obtained, and also shows in the distance, if we mistake not, the display of Canadian cotton manufactures made by Morrice & Co., which was so comprehensive and so varied as to be a standing marvel to the representatives in the same line of business from the United States and other countries. We quote:

Before proceeding further with the exhibits of European nations, let us see what the dependencies of Great Britain have on display in their several sections, extending to the south and westward of the British division. In the Canadian section, one of the most striking of all the exhibits is in the form of a mammoth wheel, the component parts of which are circular and hand saws. To present a detailed description of Canadian manufactures as represented at the Fair, would be to describe those of an ambitious and enterprising country; but one in which this department is subservient to her agriculture, lumber industries and fisheries. In her 10,000 square feet of space, Canada has a large variety of manufactures, but little of any one class, for here are illustrated many branches of industry. The cotton fabrics of the Dominion, for instance, are almost represented by a single firm, and of other textiles, the collections are insignificant, in quantity at least, as compared with those of the United States. Builders' hardware is, however, well represented. As to their comparative importance, it may here be stated that the annual value of the agricultural exports of the Dominion is nearly \$40,000,000; of lumber, \$24,000,000; and of the products of the sea, about \$10,000,000, while exports of manufactures proper are valued at less than \$7,000,000, as against some \$42,000,000 a year of merchandise imported from Great Britain alone.

Among the more interesting exhibits is a miniature representation of the industries introduced and fostered by the Dominion Government among the Indians of Manitoba and other provinces, through the schools established in their midst, within the past few years. Side by side with printing cases, work-benches, carvings, needle-work, photographs and models of industrial schools, and specimens of drawing and penmanship, are native lodges filled with robes, net-work, woven baskets, bead-work, and illustrations of those simpler occupations of savage life from which the rising generation is departing. A large skin filled with pemican, or dried and pounded buffalo meat, is displayed as somewhat of a curiosity by the Assiniboine Indians.

Among the models is one of a native village near Bute Inlet, British Columbia, and another of the Rupert Land Industrial School, the latter fashioned by an Indian boy. This school also displays a neatly printed pamphlet, the handiwork of its pupils, and from which a portion of this brief description has been derived.

—The shareholders of the enterprise known as the Atlantic and Lake Superior Railway Company will shortly meet in Montreal to consider the scheme of a continuous line between the sea coast and the lakes, which involves the lease or purchase of the Baie des Chaleurs, the Great Eastern Railway, the Montreal and Sorel Railway, the Montreal Bridge, the Ottawa Valley Railway, the Pontiac and Pacific Junction Railway, the Ontario Pacific Railway.—*Ottawa Citizen*.

BRITISH EMPIRE MUTUAL LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY.

Schemes of deferred assurance for children appear to have always held a considerable place in the estimation of Mr. G. H. Ryan—a fact which, from the reputation of the present chief officer of the British Empire as an actuary and a business man, we may safely ascribe to his firm belief that such schemes have a useful part to play in the economy of life assurance, and that they possess a certain attraction for the public. Whether the genesis of the idea in its application to modern business is or is not to be attributed to Mr. Ryan, we think we are correct in saying that the scheme now promulgated by the British Empire is the third with which he has been associated. Having found good reasons for introducing deferred assurances in other quarters of the assurance world, it might have been anticipated that Mr. Ryan would not leave the British Empire long without a scheme, and it might further have been anticipated that the latest scheme would be found the most complete of the three. Both anticipations are at any rate fully realized, the first by the company's issue of a new prospectus relating to children's assurances, and the second by the all-round equipment of the scheme it unfolds. The whole-life table, with premiums payable either during the whole term of life or up to age 50 only, and the table of endowment assurances payable at age 50, are now enrolled under one banner, with all the advantages of no medical examination, a simple proposal form, and a whole-world policy. Moreover, the present scheme offers what we believe is a novel option between a "returnable" and a "non-returnable" scale, the usual return of premiums in the event of death before age 21 being impounded in the latter case in order to give lower rates of premium. Under six tables—whole term, whole term with limited payments, endowment assurances, "returnable" and "non-returnable" rates being given in each case—a right to share in profits accrues with the commencement of full assurance at age 21. A note, however, informs us that "non-profit assurances are granted at reduced rates," and the mind would reel under the conception of six more tables at still lower rates were it not that premiums are already so small that it is difficult to see how the force of reduction can much farther go. We observe that the policy will be drawn, at the option of the insurer, "to vest either in the parent or the child on the latter attaining 21," a liberal interpretation of the law to which, as the public wants a policy with which it can deal conveniently and has the best of reasons for relying upon the *bona fides* of a strong life office, no exception can be taken. The British Empire Mutual is to be congratulated on the all-round character of its scheme, and we welcome its contribution to the Christmas literature of the year.—*Ins. Record*.

THE FUR TRADE.

The raw fur trade, which is an important item in the trade of Western Canada, is now opening for the season. The fur-bearing animals are taking on their winter coats, and the furs will soon be of prime quality. Some sorts are already of good quality. There is always more or less waste in the early part of the season by killing animals before their skins are of much value. Thus the first lots of fur to come to market are of inferior quality, being from animals killed before their winter coats are perfected, and often some of these early lots contain skins which are practically worthless. Country buyers require to be on their guard at this season of the year particularly, on account of these early-caught skins, and they should use their influence to prevent the destruction of the wild animals before the furs have become really valuable.

Western and northern Canada affords the greatest fur preserve in the world, and there is no country which produces such a quantity and variety of the most valuable sorts of furs. There are a number of varieties of very valuable furs which are annually sent from the country in large quantities. The furs are collected by storekeepers and traders and shipped to Winnipeg, where they are generally put up for competition. Buyers in the country often ship the furs in lots to wholesale houses in Winnipeg, and the latter receive bids for the lot from the fur dealers. This is a way of dis-

posing of the furs which is sure to secure the country buyer the best price going. The wholesale houses here do not charge for the trouble of receiving and disposing of the furs, as they look for a return through their regular business with the country buyers. As the wholesale houses here do not buy the furs themselves, their only object is to obtain the highest price for their country customers, from the regular fur buyers who are always on the market here.

During the season many lots of furs are shipped to Winnipeg to be disposed of in this way. Winnipeg is considered the largest primary fur market on the continent. The furs come from the north, east and west. Some of the finest lots come from the east and northeast, including the country between Lake Superior and Hudson Bay. One would suppose that these furs would go eastward to some eastern market for sale, but the competition and number of buyers on the market here draw the trade to this market. Other lots come from the mountains and British Columbia on the west, while the great northern country furnishes a liberal share. Edmonton, in northern Alberta, is also an important primary fur market, and buyers now go to that place, where they intercept the northern furs on their way out. Some of the large collectors of furs ship their goods direct to London, the great fur market of the world, and do not sell them here at all. It should be understood that the fur dealers who buy up the furs offered for sale at Winnipeg or other points, also ship to London. Thus it happens that Canadian fur manufacturers go to London to buy Canadian furs, at the great fur sales which are held at stated intervals in that great mart of commerce. Of course Canadian manufacturers buy some furs at home, but they have to attend the London sales to purchase their requirements of foreign furs, and from the great collection at London they can often secure their requirements of Canadian furs to better advantage than they can at home.

At this season of the year country buyers and traders usually receive circulars from wholesale buyers, quoting very high prices for furs. This is a feature of the fur trade. These high quotations are sent out with the object of inducing country dealers to send their furs to the parties issuing the circular. It is hardly necessary to say that the high prices quoted are not paid. Furs of the same kind vary widely in value, according to size, condition of the fur, etc. Thus a very large beaver skin, when the fur is prime, may be worth \$6 to \$7, while another skin may be as good quality, but so small in size as to be worth only half as much as the large one. A third skin may be of second quality as regards the condition of the fur, but so large in size as to be worth \$1 more than the very small prime skin. Another skin may be very small and unprime, or third or fourth quality. The classification of furs as to value with such a wide variation in quality, is therefore a very difficult matter.—*Winnipeg Commercial*.

CASTING AWAY A VESSEL.

Probably not twenty-five persons connected with lake shipping had ever read, before the beginning of criminal proceedings against certain members of the crew of the lost steamer "Nevada," of the law that attaches the death penalty to the crime of casting off a vessel. It has been well suggested that the law should be modified so as to make the penalty less severe in cases where no loss of life is involved, on account of the difficulty of conviction when death is to follow, but aside from the feature of news referred to and the proposed modification of the law, there is probably little of importance in the "Nevada" case. As the boat was heavily mortgaged and as a large part of the insurance went to the holders of the mortgage and to other creditors, it is not probable that the owners would go to such an extreme as that of casting off their vessel in order to realize the small portion of insurance that reverted to them. Furthermore, he would be an odd master who would let his engineer, mate and other members of his crew into such a secret. If the captain of the "Nevada" wanted to lose his vessel he could readily put her on to the rocks or otherwise wreck her without going to the engineer to open the sea-cock.