

**Well Done, Westmount.** Two hundred and ten occupied houses and nearly a thousand new inhabitants. Such is the result of the latest official census of the flourishing town of Westmount. Now let Montreal be heard from, and let the census-taking be systematic and satisfactory.

**Vaccination Endorsed.** "The conscientious objector" and others, here and in Great Britain, who deride the practice of vaccination as not only useless but injurious, will be surprised to learn that Major-General Corbin has telegraphed orders to all recruiting officers to vaccinate every man enlisted in the United States army in the future.

**Death at Directors' Meeting.** Those who are apt to become heated and agitated in any controversy, or who are easily disturbed or excited, will feel a sympathetic interest in the sad and dramatic death of Admiral Sir Windham Hornby. The "Financial News" (Eng.), of the 20th ultimo, says:—

"A terribly tragic occurrence took place at the Hotchkiss Company's meeting yesterday. Admiral Sir Windham Hornby (the chairman) had addressed the shareholders, and then some question was put as to the directors' fees. Such questions are invariably disturbing to disinterested directors, and Sir Windham took the matter greatly to heart. Unfortunately, the excitement brought on an attack of apoplexy, and the gallant Admiral died almost immediately, the event recalling the equally sad and sudden decease of Mr. Berry White at the meeting of the International Trustee Corporation in November, 1896."

Death under such distressing circumstances must have caused extreme regret to the questioner.

**Sixty Years Ago.** The port of Montreal evidently attracted a lot of attention years and years ago. In a Montreal paper, published two years after the coronation of Queen Victoria, we find a reference to a promise made by His Excellency the Earl of Durham, then Governor of Upper Canada. He is credited with saying that, previous to his arrival, he had "not been aware of the transcendent importance of the North American Provinces, and that this ignorance was but too general at home." Then he added that, being now so assured of our importance, the character of our people, and our value to Great Britain, he had "recommended to Her Majesty's Government to loan, from a fund which they had for investment in public works, £250,000 in Welland Canal Stock, and £250,000 for the improvement of the St. Lawrence."

An equally interesting item in the same paper deals with "the necessity and advantage of a metallic currency being struck in Her Majesty's Mint expressly for the Canadas, and introduced into circulation under the authority of the British Parliament."

**Six Months of Fire.** The story of the fire loss of last year is not pleasant reading for underwriters. But the daily records compiled by the "Commercial Bulletin" of New York tell a still more depressing tale of disaster for the first six months of the present year. The loss of the United States and Canada aggregates over \$65,500,000, being nearly 7 1-2 millions more than the amount chargeable against the corresponding six months of 1898. The "Bulletin's" table shows the losses by months as follows:—

	1897.	1898.	1899.
January . . .	\$12,049,700	\$ 9,472,500	\$10,718,000
February . . .	8,676,750	12,629,300	18,469,000
March . . . .	10,502,950	7,645,200	11,493,000
April . . . . .	10,833,000	8,211,000	9,213,000
May . . . . .	10,193,600	11,072,200	9,091,000
June . . . . .	5,684,450	9,206,900	6,714,850
Totals . . . .	\$57,940,450	\$58,237,100	\$65,699,750

Although it is perhaps too early to altogether abandon hope of any change for the better, there is much reason for the prevailing fear that any actual underwriting profit for 1899 has disappeared in the flame and smoke of the first half of the year.

**The Business of Arbitration.** The proposal of the Chilean Congress to reward Mr. Buchanan, the United States Minister to Argentina, for his services in arranging a boundary dispute between Argentina and Chili, by presenting him with \$100,000, is being criticized and protested against by the press of Santiago de Chili, and, in some excellent remarks upon the same matter, the New York "Commercial Bulletin" thus supports the Chilean newspapers:—

"If arbitrators are to make fortunes out of their decisions, their impartiality cannot remain unquestioned. Might not one party to the controversy intimate to the arbitrator what its present to him was likely to be? The suspicion that anything of this sort could happen would destroy all confidence in arbitration, and the United States has done so much to promote arbitration that it would be a great pity if any American official allowed this means of averting war to be brought into disrepute. Minister Buchanan has acquitted himself with great credit in Argentina, as well as earning the gratitude of Chili. No one suspects that he was otherwise than perfectly impartial in the valuable task he performed; he undoubtedly averted war, and he has retained the confidence of the government to which he is accredited; but, if arbitrators are to receive large fortunes from governments whose claims they pass on, confidence in their integrity will become impaired."

As the outcome of the Peace Conference at the Hague is calculated to create a school of professional arbitration, the business of a mediator and umpire between two countries may well expose him to as many temptations as are strewn in the path of the successful jockey. The "Bulletin's" note of warning is sounded none too soon.