

GRAIN INSPECTION.

The business of moving the grain crop has just begun. At the outset of the season's operations the inspection of grain is engaging the attention of those in the trade. The standards for barley have already been adopted, and we are glad to see that the inspectors of Hamilton have united with the inspectors here in securing a uniform grade. There is always a danger, year after year, in making the standards too low either in weight or colour. The Inspection Act is clear upon this point and sufficiently full for all purposes. Sometimes the regulations there laid down are not exactly followed, and committees of Corn Exchanges select samples which are not approved of by all the members of the association. In such an important and regular business as the grain trade, carried on for the most part by men of experience, the wonder is that this should be the case when the results of low standards are so well known.

The Corn Association of this city has, in adopting the standards for barley, kept close to the Act so far as the second and third grades are concerned. But number one, though fully up to the mark in weight, is too dull in appearance. There is not sufficient distinction between it and the second quality. The consequence of making so low a standard for the best quality will be the creating of "selected." There was no necessity for this—making a fourth grade in reality—when barley is of such good colour as it is this season. Another result may be the danger of Americans, when cargoes of this kind arrive in their ports, assigning them to the second grade under their classification. Such a case as this would give rise to trouble between sellers and buyers, and by proper care in choosing the grade misunderstandings might be altogether avoided. We hope the Association will reconsider the matter and fix a higher standard. Should they neglect to do so, buyers in the States will most probably be prejudiced against the Canadian product. When Canada is justly regarded as the finest barley producing country in the world, the result of such prejudice might be seriously felt in prices.

The standards for wheat will be selected in the course of a week. We hope that due care will be shown in the classification. Otherwise dealers and those in the business will betray their own interests. An effort should be made to secure a uniformity of standard over the whole country. Upon this matter the trade has always evinced the greatest carelessness. This is the more surprising as grain is the greatest

staple of the country, and anything tending to improve the movement of it should be adopted with the briefest delay.

CUTHBERT VS. THE COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION.—This is an action brought by a party who at one time occupied the position of Vice President of the Commercial Travellers' Association. In consequence of some troubles and disputes a resolution was passed removing him from that position. About the same time the plaintiff published a paper called the *Commercial Traveller*, the general tone and pretensions of which were of such a nature that the members and friends of the association considered that it was meant to pass with the public as the production of the association. The first and only issue of this paper contained many aspersions on the character and doings of some of the officers of the association with whom the plaintiff had had disputes. This caused fresh trouble, and the association passed another resolution, which was entered in their books, censuring the plaintiff for his conduct generally, whereupon Mr. Cuthbert commenced this action, claiming damages in respect of this resolution as being a libel, damages for his removal, a return of his membership fee, and praying for a mandamus by the Court to compel the association to restore him to his former position. This novel action having so many objects was tried at the last Fall Assizes for the County of York before Mr. Justice Patterson, who nonsuited the plaintiff. A rule was taken out the next term, calling on the defendants to show cause why this nonsuit should not be set aside. This rule came on in the regular term for argument before the Court of Queen's Bench during the term just ended, and was duly argued. Some of the more important points for decision are—1st, whether there ever was a publication of the resolution complained of as a libel so as to bring it within the law of libel, it being contended on behalf of the defendant that as they were an association they were as one person, and entering it in their book did not constitute a publication to any one else. Should the Court hold this to be correct, that will be an end of that branch of the case which claims damages for the alleged libel. 2nd, it is contended that the resolution in question, even if held by the Court to have been published, is a privileged communication, in which case the defendants would not be liable in damages unless express malice were proved. 3rd, whether, even if the resolution be held to be privileged, its terms are so strong as to show malice of themselves. Judgment was reserved, and will probably be given in a few weeks.

—The result of the conference between Mr. Hickson of the Grand Trunk Railway, and a deputation of citizens from Waterloo, Ont., is that Mr. Hickson expresses his willingness to build and run a line northward from Galt to Waterloo for a bonus not to exceed \$15,000, the exact amount to depend on the cost of grading.

—The regular monthly meeting of the Harbour Commissioners of Montreal was held on the afternoon of the 7th instant, Hon. John Young in the chair. There were also present: Messrs. Thomas Cramp, Andrew Allan, Peter Donovan, C. H. Gould, Adolphe Roy, and Mr. H. H. Whitney, Secretary. The chairman informed the meeting that Mayor Hingston had been chosen successor to the late Commissioner Bernard, and that Mr. Andrew Allan had been re-elected in the shipping interest. After referring to the visit of the Minister of Public Works to the works in progress in the harbour, and also to the scene of the deepening of the channel towards Quebec, he stated that correct time was now indicated by a time-ball on the cupola of the new building of the Board, which will be ready for occupation in a few days. The Harbour Master's statistics show an increase in the tonnage of sea-going vessels arriving up to 1st September, but a decrease in their number over 1875. As compared with 1874, however, the amount of tonnage and the number are both less. The figures are:—1874, vessels, 505; tonnage, 304,952. 1875, vessels, 415; tonnage, 253,366. 1876, vessels, 396; tonnage, 258,671. The rate of towage by the chain tug has been reduced from three cents per ton to two, a desirable change, and one that will be more likely to keep her employed. Applications were received from railway companies for the privilege of extending their rails upon the wharves. Mr. Cramp also spoke of the importance of the petroleum trade, predicting that shipments from Montreal might be increased from the 30,000 or 40,000 brls. they export this year to 400,000. The Hon. John Young was unanimously re-elected chairman at a previous meeting of the directors.

—An important decision respecting the disposition of escheats has just been given. In an action brought before the Superior Court at Kamouraska, some time ago, the Quebec Government urged their claim to the escheats within the Province. The Minister of Justice claimed them in the name of the Crown, and contended that they should revert to the Dominion Exchequer. Judgment was given confirming the right of the Federal Government. On application to the Court of Appeals this decision was reversed in favour of the Province. Matters of this kind which have often raised difficulties in the Courts are thus set at rest.

—We have received a circular issued by Messrs D. Sutherland & Son, of Newmarket, notifying their customers that on the first of October next they "will abandon the long credit, large profit, and slow pay system," and will pursue the cash system in their general store business, a step which their experience has taught them is in the right direction. We are glad to see this move taken, and shall welcome any further departures in the same line. The experience of a number who have already made the attempt gives marked satisfaction to seller and to buyer.