

Fighting the Tussock Moths.

The Natural History Society of Montreal has made a gallant effort to kill the Tussock Moths on the trees which are such an ornament to the city, but their efforts have been blocked.

In view of the danger to the trees, it was arranged that Dr. Fletcher, Government entomologist should give some information and a public meeting was held in the Society's rooms. Dr. Fletcher very graphically described the egg cocoons and the proper way to destroy them. A deputation of the Society waited upon the Civic Finance Committee, and Dr. Penhallow, the President, pointed out the danger to the trees, and their value to the city; he asked for the modest sum of \$100, for the destruction of the cocoons, to be used in giving prizes to children, under the direction of the Society, who would do all the necessary work in looking after it. This was agreed to by the Committee, providing the consent of the Parks and Ferries' Committee was first obtained. This was apparently secured, but it afterwards appeared that this latter Committee intrusted the spending of the money to Park Superintendent Pino-teau. He hired a few men, who, instead of picking off the cocoons and burning them, simply scrubbed down the tree trunks, irrespective of cocoons, leaving the eggs on the ground to hatch into the destructive caterpillars.

Meantime, the Society had advertised about the premiums, and has received a large number of cocoons, many from a square which the gardeners said was absolutely free, and the question arises, who will pay the prizes? The \$100 voted by the Finance Committee has already been spent, or rather absolutely wasted, but as the money was voted to the Natural History Society, they naturally expect to receive it.

Dr. Penhallow has sent in a bill for some \$14, to the Finance Committee, explaining that the whole aim of the Society had been frustrated, as the gardeners had forbidden children to secure the cocoons, and some members had seen the stupid way in which the men were working. He asks for the payment of the bill, and that the matter shall be enquired into, so that the mis-direction of the money voted be explained.

The Ontario Municipal Act.

Replying to a deputation which was asking for some amendments to the Ontario Municipal Act, Premier Whitney, said that he was quite convinced that the Municipal Law of Ontario was in an involved state. He believed that the Act was in such a state that not a single man in the Province understood it, and thought it should be torn apart and remodelled, and shortened by one half or even two-thirds.

More Courage Needed.

"If the aldermen of the City of Montreal were as brave as they are ingenious, it would be a good thing for the city. They do manage to discover some very wonderful ways of levying petty taxation, but there is not one of them with nerve enough to go to the root of Montreal's civic difficulties and propose an increase in the assessment rate, the only way in which the money wanted can be fairly raised. It does not take much nerve to levy a lot of petty taxes and raise a crop of law-suits.—The Gazette, Montreal.

Gas in Montreal.

The resolution on the gas question in Montreal, which is causing such excitement, is as follows:

"That instead of acceding to the request of the company to be exempted from paying the 3 per cent. which it is held to pay during a period of five years from the 1st of May, 1905, it be stipulated that the company shall pay such percentage during said period of time, and that, in return therefor, the price of gas be reduced as follows:

For gas for lighting purposes, for the years beginning on the 1st May, 1905 and 1st May, 1906, the price to be.. .. \$1.15
 For 1907 and 1908.. .. 1.10
 For 1909.. .. 1.05
 From 1910 to the expiration of the contract. 1.00
 For gas for cooking purposes:
 For 1905 and 1906.. .. 95
 For 1907 and until the contract expires.. .. 90
 For gas supplied by automatic meters:
 For the years 1905 and 1906.. .. \$1.00
 For the years 1907, 1908 and 1909.. .. 95
 From 1910 to the expiration of the contract.. 90

Permission Necessary First.

Mr. Carscallen, Chairman of the Private Bills Committee of the Ontario Legislature, has called attention to the frequent application of municipalities for bills to allow of expenditure already incurred, and urges a different procedure. The case that called for the remarks was that of Meaford, Ont. where the old Council spent \$10,000 without authority, and their successors do not know how they can pay it.

Protection Against Fire.

Coroner McMahon, in the sad case of the burning of the Convent at Ste. Geneviève, Que., drew attention to several matters of the greatest importance to the public. He did not think that Inspector Lessard, a printer by trade, knew enough about buildings to fill the position properly. He said that it was unfortunate that political influence placed men in responsible positions who were ignorant and incompetent. He spoke very strongly of the complete absence of any apparatus, or system for fighting fires, and stated that municipal councils generally were ignorant or careless of their duty in preserving the lives of the citizens from danger in case of fire.

Natural Gas in Quebec.

Yamachiche, Que., seems likely to be the centre of a gas producing district that may prove very valuable. The first discovery of natural gas was made about 2½ years ago when boring for water, but no use was made of it. Two years ago however, the village blacksmith, Mr. Grondin, bored for gas and found it at the depth of only 300 feet, and has since lighted and heated his house with it. This example encouraged others and over thirty wells were drilled, but a couple of serious accidents having occurred, the people became alarmed. So an American Syndicate, called the Canadian Gas and Oil Co. have secured rights on 60,000 acres, for a small cash payment and a royalty on the production of gas and oil.