

compared with 1877. The receipts from freight traffic decreased £109,839, or 15.83 per cent., and the tonnage 85,510 tons, or 6.94 per cent. The total number of passengers was 1,129,892, against 1,149,376; and the quantity of freight was 1,146,387, against 1,121,897 tons. The average receipt per passenger was 5s. 2½d., against 5s. 1½d., and per ton of freight 10s. 2½d., against 11s. 3d. The charges for maintenance and renewals of rolling stock and road were, in 1878, £301,362, and £303,219 in 1877, a decrease of £1,857. The expenditure for fuel, wages and other charges, was also decreased in the last quarter, being, in 1878, £407,392, against £465,938 in 1877, a decrease of £58,549.

#### FIRE RECORD.

Watford, May 15th.—A. McDonald's saw mill, in Brooke, burned with about 30,000 feet of Lumber. Loss \$2,500; no insurance.—Kincardine, 15th.—S. Avery, barn and farm implements burned; insured in London Mutual \$1,470.—Tara, 15th.—J. Williams house and barn burned; insured in Isolated Risk for \$200.—Napance.—M. Smith, of Richmond, had his barns, cows, waggon and implements burned by lightning. Loss about \$2,000, barn insured \$400.—Arnott, 17th.—Railway Hotel and sheds burned; insured in Gore \$1,000, Huron and Middlesex Mutuals, \$1,000.—Listowel, 20th.—Wm. Swains house burned; insured in Union.—London, 21st.—Keenlysidess confectionary establishment was damaged about \$2500.

OTHER PROVINCES.—Alberton, P. E. I., 10th.—The Union Hotel burned; loss \$800.—Halifax, 20th.—Macdonalds machine shop burned; insured in Royal Canadian \$2,000, damage about \$600.—Quebec, 21st.—The stables of the Quebec Hotel burned.—Stanford, Que. 21st.—A brick house, wood shed and station agents house burned with 600 cords of wood. Dublin, May 19.—At noon a fire broke out in the rear of the stables of the Dominion Hotel. The following parties are said to be insured; Joseph Kidd, buildings, loss \$20,000, insured \$5,000; J. McKenna, druggist, insurance not known; Val. Straube, stoves, etc., and building, insurance not known; loss \$6,000. Geo. Dieget, saddler, building and stock said to be insured. Dominion Hotel, loss \$5,000, insured in British America \$1,500. B. Allan, carriage shop, partly insured. Railway Hotel, \$100; L. Stavane, house damaged \$100, insured; Thos. King, barn, etc., insured \$600. The following parties are uninsured, it is said: John S. Bean Miller, furniture, \$1,200; Dr. Rourke, office and furniture, \$1,500; C. Freel, boot and shoe shop, \$600; P. Calkghan, furniture, \$300; John Howard, tailor, building and stock, \$500; Thomas Deltan's house and blacksmith's shop, \$700; W. Suhr, Barber, \$100; John Hawkins, butcher, stock, \$300; C. Freel, Sr., furniture, \$200; Mrs. Dunkin, furniture, \$150; Geo. Farr, \$100; John Gelligan, \$100 on household goods; Mrs. Nevin, \$300; Thomas Decantillon, \$150; A. M. Ross, blacksmith's shop \$700; E. Hainah, \$100; George French, furniture, \$50; Thomas Page damage to furniture, \$100, no insurance; P. Dunn, Albion Hotel, damage \$75; James Williams, damage to house \$100; Malcolm Lamond, team burned in Dominion Hotel stables, \$200; Hugh Brown, horse burnt in Dominion Hotel stables, \$75; Warren, waggon burnt at Dominion Hotel, \$75. The origin of the fire is unknown.

#### A PRACTICAL MERCHANT.

What constitutes a practical merchant? asks the reader. In mercantile parlance, he is A 1 at his business; one who stands forward in bold relief and holds his own against competitors. Thoroughly conversant with the market value

of the different commodities in his store, he carefully estimates his chances of profit, and is prepared either to enlarge his business or curtail his operations, according to the exigencies of the times. He is ever learning and treasuring up his experience. His knowledge to-day is greater by the experience of yesterday. He possesses skill in accounts and is acquainted with the laws which govern trade, both home and foreign; has abundance of firmness, and can say no, and mean no, when a "drummer" insists on selling him a bill of goods he don't want, arguing that they are "so cheap," or that "Mr. So-and-so bought a liberal amount."

He is also open hearted and generous to employees who seek to forward his interests. A good man, whether as a salesman indoor or "on the road," should not be made or even allowed to feel that for so much work he receives so much pay, and there the obligation ends. A practical merchant is made so by experience, and true experience is the result of reflection. At the close of the year, in looking back over the business of the past, he sees wherein he has been successful and where he has committed error. If the errors of the past are avoided in the future, and the success made still more successful, the experience may not have been dearly bought.

The practical merchant is also a student of cause and effect, and is well posted in commercial information, which will aid his judgment in foreseeing and taking advantage of the future conditions of the home and foreign markets. The courses of the market are subject to unerring laws. The supplies of one portion of the earth respond to the wants of another. Deficiency in the production of any commodity in one section will advance prices in others.

A practical merchant will always have a reliable commercial paper ready for reference. He will be found to be an observer of the seasons of the year when the different markets advance, and his purchases—to meet actual wants—will anticipate these advances, but will never be made in a spirit of recklessness. It may be said that but few men possess the requisite qualifications for thus becoming a first-class merchant. If this be so, the sooner those who have chosen this calling begin to study the subject the better for them, as the public will patronize those best qualified to please and serve them. Trade is a study. It is not hereditary, to be handed down from father to son.—*N.Y. Mercantile Journal.*

ORIGIN OF MYSTERIOUS FIRES.—A correspondent of the St. Louis *Republican* thus sheds some light on the mysterious origin of some destructive fires. "One winter some years ago, while in business in New York, keeping open store, which was lighted with gas until ten o'clock at night, and with closed doors, I discovered during the evening a faint flash of light resembling a dull flash of heat lightning. This occurred for several successive nights, and my curiosity which was excited as to the cause of this sudden flash, was increased by discovering a leak in my gas meter, and the escaping gas from this leak burning at the leakage. The mystery was instantly solved. The escaping gas diffused through the room, and coming in contact with the burning jets, ignited; and although the volume of gas diffused through the room was light, and was entirely consumed by the faint flash noted, it communicated the flame to the leak in the meter, which continued burning. Now, it is known to be an almost universal practice with business houses to keep one gas jet burning during the whole night, and if there is any escape of gas in the building while the doors and windows are closed and a jet burning, ignition inevitably takes place. A very important question to be solved, and it seems to me well worthy the investigation of the fire and fire

insurance departments, is, what amount of escaping gas coming in contact with a burning jet will ignite a building, or any of the inflammable articles in it. I imagine a trial will show that gas escaping from one ordinary burner, coming in contact with a lighted one, will not only ignite but set fire to the building, or at least to its more combustible contents."

NOTEWORTHY INVENTION.—An invention has recently been made in England which casts into shade all previous advance in labor-saving machinery. In a mill near Lowmoor, in the vicinity of Bradford, England, there is now running machinery which is left 48 hours without any person attending to it, working the whole of that time and producing a beautiful fabric, a braid we believe, without any flaw in the goods or mistake in the machine. This mill is now running 132 hours per week, starting on Monday morning at half-past five and running until Saturday night at 12 p. m., only stopping the machinery the one day for cleaning. During that time the fabulous quantity of 200,000 yards braid can be produced, the machines also working forty-eight hours without any attention or labor of any sort, and they are then replenished with warps in the wonderfully short time of fifteen minutes, one girl being all that is employed to do this part of the work, and that all being completed during the day time. The machinery is thus left working, and producing a fabric entirely by itself from half past five in the evening until half past six the following morning; and during the time it has been running it has fully realized the expectations of the inventor. The goods produced by this new invention are improved in appearance, and what was sold before at two pounds five shillings and sixpence, is now selling at twenty four shillings.—*R cord r.*

#### Commercial.

##### MONTREAL MARKETS.

Montreal, 20th. May, 1879.

In the shipping annals of Montreal for this season the most important event to be recorded is the arrival of two steamships from Cuba direct, with sugar for Redpath & Son. Tonnage here is plentiful, and although the rates are low the demand is very far from being lively. The wholesale trade have been pretty busy during the week, but as a rule in all branches, buyers are very cautious in laying in stocks, although small orders are pretty numerous. It is expected that a good number of buyers will be drawn to the city by the approaching celebration of the Queen's Birthday, and that next week will be a busy one here.

ASHES.—Pots.—We have had a fairly active market for ashes during the past week, prices have kept very steady at \$3.70 to 3.75 for firsts; some poor tares selling about 5c. under inside quotation. Seconds are steady at \$3.30; Pearls, only a few sales are transpiring of firsts at \$5.75. The stocks at present in store are: Pots 2015 brls; Pearls 90 brls.

BOOTS & SHOES.—There is little doing, orders and money are scarce, Travellers are sending in only very moderate sorting up orders and quotations remain unchanged.

CATTLE.—There were upwards of 200 head of cattle on the St. Gabriel market yesterday, for which the demand was very slow, and prices realized were under those of the previous Monday, the range being from 4½ to 5c. Hogs were in fair supply and brought from 5 to 5½c. per lb. live weight. The arrivals for shipment to England numbered nearly 1,400 head.

DRY GOODS.—There is little change to report in the state of this trade. Travellers continue to send in a fair number of orders, and as our retail merchants have been pretty busy, they have