

# The Chronicle

Insurance & Finance.

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ESTABLISHED JANUARY, 1881

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY

VOL. XXI. No. 21.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MAY 24, 1901.

SINGLE COPY - - .10  
ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION - \$2.00

## Inspection of Gas Meters.

The gas meter is one of the unsolved mysteries of the age. Whether gas is burnt or not this marvellous machine goes on for ever registering consumption. That its mechanism is eccentric has been proved up to the hilt by a thousand tests and experiences. Whether a meter can be set to run "fast" or "slow," like a watch, is not known, but it is generally believed that its pace can be regulated by the gas company's inspector. Cases are known where a house has been closed for several weeks, not a light used in it for a moment, yet, at the end of the month, the meter has registered the usual consumption during that month. The remarkable feature about a gas meter is that it never "leans to mercy's side" by under registering the alleged consumption. A gas meter is as faithful to the company as a good dog. It has no conscience so heeds not the command, "Thou shalt not bear false witness." There seems to have been some effort made to solve the meter mystery by unauthorized persons who have laid their unconsecrated hands on this sacred vessel. An Act has just been passed ordaining that: "Every person, except the official inspector, who verifies or tests, or causes to be verified or tested, any meter after it has been fixed for use shall incur a penalty of \$25 for every meter so verified or tested." This is an outrageous law, but one so easily evaded that it will be a dead letter. Suppose a householder tests his meter by careful records of the number of lights used in his rooms, with the length of time they are each lighted and compares the result of one month's tests with the record of another month, as we have known done, such a proceeding involves a penalty of \$25! Testing a gas meter is nothing more than proving whether the measure used for retailing what a person pays for is correct or not. It is akin to a

housewife testing whether the meat delivered is up to the weight charged for. A gas company, however, acts differently to other traders by charging the consumer for the use of the measure used by the company to ascertain what each customer has purchased. And now, if a buyer of gas tests whether this measure is reliable, is accurate, or is working out a false statement, such buyer is liable to be fined \$25! The case as regards electric meters is different, as it is most undesirable for non-experts to tamper with the electrical current or an electrical instrument.

## The Pan American Exhibition.

The Exhibition at Buffalo was opened this week, with stately ceremonies. The location is an excellent one. Buffalo itself, as a city, is an exhibition worth visiting, several of its avenues being made exceedingly beautiful by splendid trees, and continuous lawns and flower gardens whose appearance is much enhanced by the entire absence of unsightly fences between or in front of the properties. The British love of privacy is averse to this system, but its charm along an avenue is manifest, especially when the gardens and lawns are kept as attractive by flowers and flowering bushes as they are at Buffalo. The Exhibition, called the "Pan-American," is chiefly distinguished from preceding ones by the electrical display being of unprecedented splendour. The current is derived from Niagara Falls, a few miles distant. Such a number of electric lights were never before used in so small an area, nor ever before were any such spectacular effects produced by illumination. Buffalo is a very hospitable city, much given to the enjoyment of life, as it is also to the hard work that gives enjoyment its zest. The city has our best wishes for the success of its Exhibition.