

comes the present use of a flag to indicate a public sale.

In ancient times in England, auction sales were held by the light of a candle. When the bidding was opened, a small candle—similar to what is now called a vesta—was lighted, at each bid a fresh one was lighted, and if no new bid was given before it went out, a second, and on that going out without a bid, a third candle was lighted, the last bidden at the time the third candle went out being declared the purchaser.

In Pepy's Diary, under date of Nov. 6, 1660, we read: "To our office, where we all met for the sale of 2 ships by an inch of candle,"—the first time I ever saw anything of the kind—where I observed how they do invite one another, and at last how they do cry, and we have much to tell who did cry last! This custom has not yet died out in England, as the following from a Bristol paper, dated March 29, 1873, proves: "The practice of letting by inch of 'candle' still prevails in the county of Dorset. At the annual letting of the parish meadow of Broadway near Weymouth, which occurred a few weeks ago, an inch of candle was placed on a piece of wood nine inches square, and lighted by one of the parish officers, the biddings were taken down by another parish officer, and the chance of taking the meadow was open to all when the candle was burning. The last bidder before the candle went out was the incoming tenant."

THE LATE JOHN LOVELL.

It is with unfeigned regret that we record the loss which we, in common with all the journalistic fraternity of this city, as well as the public generally, have sustained in the demise of Mr. John Lovell. Even before many a man, now prominent in public life, had been born, his name had become a household word throughout the Dominion, because of his enterprise and courage in undertaking to develop Canadian literature at a period when few would have ventured upon the hazards involved. It is not only as a publisher of school books and directories, but also in his encouragement of high class literature, that the people of Canada are indebted to him. A man of strong will, but generous impulses, he always had the courage of his convictions, and in all relationships of life exhibited a character above reproach. He was always outspoken, upright and straightforward. Not only was his name honored amongst business men, but in his younger days he also exhibited on many occasions a high degree of patriotism and public spirit, having occupied a prominent position during the politically troublous times of 1837. Mr. Lovell was staunch in his adherence to his church relations, and while a devout member of the Church of England, was also possessed of that broad spirit of charity, which made him a favorite in other religious circles. As the head of a large family, his example was ever such as his descendants can feel proud of, for he has left them the heritage of a good name and success.

FIRE LOSSES FOR JUNE, 1893, IN CANADA.

DATE.	SITUATION.	RISK.	TOTAL LOSS.	INSURANCE LOSS.
June 4	St. John's, P.Q.	Pottery.....	\$12,000	\$7,000
6	Truro, N. S.	Stores.....	35,000	10,000
3	Abbotsford, P.Q.	Dwelling.....	6,000	3,500
10	Montreal.....	Dry Goods Store..	30,000	30,000
8	N. D. de Grace..	Convent, V. Maria..	600,000	100,000
12	Sault Ste. Marie	Stores.....	10,000	6,600
9	Winnipeg.....	Street Railway Sta.	14,000	12,000
9	Yarmouth, N.S.	Skating Rink.....	4,500	3,000
9	Nixon Ont.....	Dwelling.....	3,500	2,700
10	Longue Pointe..	Church & Stores..	25,000	17,200
12	Belleville.....	Shingle Mill.....	8,000	2,000
5	Canterbury, N.B.	Stores, etc.....	15,000	9,000
11	Strathroy.....	Storehouse & Lum.	3,500	2,700
11	Deer Lake, N.B.	Saw Mill.....	12,000	5,000
		Mono Mills.....	6,000	4,500
18	Montreal.....	Boot & Shoe F'try	48,000	48,000
19	Cardinal.....	Stores.....	10,000	5,500
20	Gibson, N.B.	Conflagration....	150,000	67,000
19	Niagara Falls..	Planing Mills.....	7,000	1,500
20	St. Martin's, N.B.	Saw Mill.....	12,000	9,700
20	Virden, Man.....	Flour Mill.....	10,000	5,000
20	Oshawa.....	Stores.....	4,000	2,200
22	Oka.....	Monastery.....	1,000	1,000
23	Auburn.....	Saw Mill.....	3,000	1,500
26	Montreal.....	Dry Goods Store..	12,000	12,000
26	Ottawa.....	do.....	2,300	2,300
23	Rat Portage.....	Stores, etc.....	9,000	5,600
20	Fraserville.....	Dwelling.....	2,000	1,400
28	Toronto.....	Boot & Shoe F'try	6,000	4,000
Total.....			\$1,060,800	\$582,500

SUMMARY FOR SIX MONTHS.

	1891.		1892.	
	Total Loss.	Insurance Loss.	Total Loss.	Insurance Loss.
For January.....	\$622,200	\$462,700	\$462,000	\$301,900
" February.....	245,400	171,700	722,500	449,100
" March.....	702,100	439,900	671,030	533,530
" April.....	407,400	319,600	661,900	501,200
" May.....	507,500	296,500	319,500	197,400
" June.....	195,800	140,900	1,060,800	582,500
Totals.....	\$2,680,000	\$1,831,300	\$3,839,030	\$2,366,130

SOCIETATE OFFICII CURÆ ROMANÆ.

THE FIRST MUTUAL AID SOCIETY IN HISTORY.

The old juriconsult, Scaccia, informs us in his treatise upon *Commerce and Exchange* (Rome 1617), that there was a "Society of the Officials of the Roman Court," which organization (commerce, he calls it) was first approved of by Leo X (made Pope 1513): then by Paul IV (1555), and subsequently by Pius IV (1557): and he adds: is to-day (1617) of very frequent occurrence in the city of Rome and in many of the States subject to the Church, as they know, who are familiar with these things, where a partnership is agreed upon for a certain period of time, usually for six months, or as may be agreed upon, with the right to withdraw on fifteen days' notice. Among the offices of the Roman Court, when they become vacant by death, some other official takes his place and pays a certain sum of money to the society, upon the risk of his life, or whatever other persons, being officials, will promise to make a *pro rata* division among their associates, of the profits arising from the office, during the continuance of the society, which money was loaned to whoever wished it at the rate of twelve on the hundred, per annum, upon the promise to return it to the