

PROMINENT TOPICS.

The heat has been successful in making what sporting men call "a record." Thermometers have their peculiarities and their movements are influenced by local surroundings. There is no such thing as absolute, standard shade, as the air in wide districts of this city varies in temperature from other districts owing to higher or lower elevation, more or less exposure to currents, and the influence of radiation from buildings, roadways, trees, etc. But there was a practical unanimity amongst the city thermometers on Monday and Tuesday last that the heat exceeded the records of some twenty years, the maximum in the shade at the observatory being 94, which "down town" meant 97 or 98. It speaks much for the healthfulness of Montreal that not a single death occurred from heat, and the street prostrations were few, though numerous enough in dwellings. Our citizens little realise what they owe to the Mountain Park on sultry days, the vast, the incalculable area of leaves in motion on the slopes have a material effect upon the temperature of the district, and the mountain draws or sets in motion currents of air regularly every evening that are most pleasant and reviving. Queen's Park, Toronto, is usually the hottest place in the city, while here, most of our parks are cooled after sunset by refreshing currents of mountain air. While this is so, the public would vote as one man for giving the solar despot a vacation.

Though the street car conductors generally are careful of life and limb, at several crossings they put pedestrians into grave peril by their monopolising the roadway. At the intersection of Craig, Bleury and St. Peter the various lines of cars run so as to render the crossing over Craig street a very disagreeable, often indeed a very dangerous bit of navigation. No policeman is stationed there, as there is at similar places in other cities where the civic authorities show anxiety to have street traffic so regulated as to conduce to the safety and convenience of citizens. Surely a few officers could be spared from the police stations for this duty at noon and from 5.30 to 6.30 p.m. daily. The car conductors should also have instructions to avoid blocking the roadway and to keep an eye upon the stream of pedestrians anxiously looking for a chance to make a dash across Craig street. But how about the aged, the infirm, the timid, the young, is it not the duty of a City to see provision made for protecting the lives and limbs of these classes of citizens when crossing a thoroughfare? Other cities recognise this duty, why is Montreal so negligent? The new Chief of Police should give this consideration.

Another point on regard to street traffic is the legal rights of pedestrians. An important decision

was recently given in the States, which doubtless would be followed by a Canadian Court were the same question raised as to a pedestrians right to cross a street car track. The judgment reads:—

"In a case where a car can be controlled so as to avoid running down a person crossing the track it cannot be said that it is negligence, as a matter of law, for the person to attempt to cross the track. In many of the streets, during the busy portions of the day, these cars are running constantly, within a few feet of each other, and if a person about to cross the track is to wait until no car is in sight, the track would be impassable, except at the risk of the pedestrian being guilty of contributory negligence. The right of a railroad company to use the public streets is conditioned upon the right of the public to also use them in the ordinary way, and no railroad company has the right to so block the streets that the public are excluded from crossing them, except at the risk of being run over. It cannot, therefore, be contributory negligence, as a matter of law, for a person to start to cross a track when the car is at such a distance that the motorman can prevent its running him down, if attending to his business, and operating the car in a careful and prudent manner."

This judgment has an important bearing upon accident insurance business, so has the neglect of protection to pedestrians at our principal street corners. The city had to pay recently about \$2,000 for an accident claim and costs which would have been all saved, as well as a man's life, had a policeman been stationed to regulate the road traffic where it is dangerous to those afoot.

The Harbour Commissioners at a meeting on 15th inst passed the following resolution:

"Whereas the Connors' Syndicate have wholly failed to carry out the terms and conditions of their contract with the Harbour Commission, and of their lease of the different sites belonging to the commission, and owing to their failure, the commission and the trade of Montreal have suffered loss.

"Be it resolved that the commissioners' attorneys be instructed to take immediate action to secure the fulfilment of the contract and in default to secure the resiliation of the lease and the forfeiture of the \$50,000 deposited as security for the fulfilment of their obligations under the lease."

Alderman Martineau's notice of motion to reconsider the lighting contract question will probably bring on another discussion in the middle of August. What is inspiring this move is not apparent. So far as the public knows, nothing has happened since the motion was passed which practically put all the tenders aside. It would be well to have a notice of motion of this important character accompanied by explanations as to the reason of its being given. In the meantime the City Treasurer has returned the cheque sent by each tenderer as a deposit, as it would