

Of the two joint stock fire companies the Mercantile of Waterloo shows gross premiums of \$78,410, total income \$81,691, commissions \$11,700, salaries \$3,689, all other expenses \$3,316. The shareholders are surely having their nearly six million of business managed on a most economical scale. The Queen city reports gross premiums of \$13,657, total income \$20,125, commissions \$1,166, salaries and expenses \$5,830.

Of the mixed companies the Waterloo shows cash premiums of \$40,480, the Gore District \$32,700, the Hand-in-Hand \$18,600. The total income of these three companies were roundly \$88,000, \$70,700 and \$27,000 respectively; the total income of all six was \$215,000. The Waterloo carries over 10½ millions of insurance, the Gore over 6½ millions and the Hand-in-Hand over 2 millions. The report does not say what has become of the \$15,617 "money borrowed," which appeared among the liabilities of the Victoria Mutual in 1883; there is no heading for this item in the present report, but that company is credited with a "Repayment of Loan" amounting to \$1,236.

Coming to the purely mutual companies:—people who think money should breed will be disposed to ask why the Economical should report among its assets \$26,527 in cash, uninvested; the nearest to it in this respect is the Westminster with only \$5,690; the total of all the 55 companies is under \$70,000. The number of policies in force by this class is \$51,321, covering risks of about 63½ millions of dollars. The Wellington made assessments of \$5,707 in 1884, but it reports \$16,165 arrears of prior assessments. The assessment arrears of all the pure mutuals are only \$28,827. Among the tables of income and expenditure the following companies paid out more than they received: Bay of Quinte, Bertie and Wiloughby, North Blenheim, Canadian Miller's, Caradoc, Culross, Dorchester, Globe, Grey & Bruce, Guelph Township, Howick, London Township, McKillop, Nichol, Missouri East and West, and Zorra West, Simcoe County, and Townsend. The total income of all this class of mutuals was \$196,149 and the expenditure \$175,895. The gross amount at risk by mutuals of all classes amounted to nearly 73½ millions; the new business for the year under review to 24 millions of dollars. We continue the table of the "purely mutuals" as in former years:

Unassd Other	Unpaid Bor'd	Amt. at
Cos. Prem.	Assets losses	money risk
notes,		

	1880.				
\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
55	1,284,006	91,338	27,250	19,990	43,724,775
49	1,320,085	82,724	16,847	17,798	44,268,784
51	1,499,743	92,747	7,890	21,537	52,142,307
51	1,636,585	114,965	12,697	10,069	56,468,400
55	1,845,837	128,483	23,941	13,777	63,240,500

Appended to the Superintendent's Report are the Insurance Amendment Acts of 1885.

CANAL TOLLS.

The meeting of the members of the Board of Trade, and of the Corn Exchange on Monday, the 8th inst., was well attended. Mr. Magor was called to the chair, and Mr. W. J. Patterson, secretary of the Board of Trade, read the report of the Committee appointed to prepare a memorial to the Government in favor of the reduction of canal tolls and harbor dues. A deputation was appointed to proceed to Ottawa on the following day to bring the subject under the notice of the Government. The fact that the State of New York has abolished the tolls on the Erie canal is of course a strong argument in favor of the abolition of the tolls, but, on the other hand the entire tolls are said to be only ¼ cent a bushel and the demand is only for the reduction of one-half, leaving them at ½ cent a bushel, while the rate charged by the forwarders between Kingston and Montreal is 2½ cents, exclusive of tolls. There is a strong feeling on the part of many who are conversant with the subject that the rates of the forwarders on the St. Lawrence route should be reduced as well as the tolls and harbor dues. It is most desirable that no effort should be spared to divert traffic to the St. Lawrence route, but the subject is one surrounded with difficulties. On the one hand there is an active competition between the forwarders by the lakes and rivers, and the railroads. Again, there is competition between vessels taking freight from the United States ports on the Atlantic sea board and those from the Canadian ports. It is thought by many that some combined effort should be made to effect the object which all have in view. It is satisfactory to find that there is, so far as we can judge, a general desire on the part of those interested in the trade to co-operate for the promotion of the common object.

The deputation to Ottawa had an interview with the Honorable Messrs. Pope, Sir Alexander Campbell and Chapleau, and the subject was fully discussed, the forwarders expressing a readiness to reduce their charges 3-8th of a cent per

bushel if the tolls were abolished and the harbor dues reduced to 1-8th of a cent. The result was a promise on the part of Mr. Pope that the subject should receive every consideration, but that anything that might be done would be of a temporary character.

STARTLING FACTS.

Such is the heading of a contribution to the Quebec *Morning Chronicle* which we reproduce below. It is not surprising that Quebec should have suffered so much in her trade, when such an organization as that described has the power not only to raise the rate of wages but to prevent the adoption of labor-saving appliances in a country where labor is dear in comparison with what it is elsewhere:

(To the Editor of the *Morning Chronicle*.)

SIR,—A picture reviving the history of the Middle Ages was seen at the Allan wharf Friday last. The newest and largest of their steamers, the "*Carthaginian*" fitted with every modern appliance for loading cargo, was taking some short timber, and, instead of using her steam winch, to do so, was actually compelled by the regulations of the Ship Laborers Society to take it, in by the old-fashioned hand winch, or slow and costly process. These regulations or by-laws are of the most intricate character, and well fitted to embarrass the trade. In addition, the rate of wages, three dollars for eight hours' work, day time, and one half more at night, far exceeds wages paid in Montreal, or at ports on the American Seaboard such as Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, etc., the very places which warmly compete with the St. Lawrence for the carrying trade of the West. The leaders of the Society appear to be under the delusion that they are acting in the interests of the working-man, and no doubt they believe so, as they refuse to listen to the remonstrances of the merchants, who see the trade of Quebec annually declining in volume, the revenue of the Harbor Commissioners year by year steadily decreasing, and wharf property of every description absolutely unsaleable. Quebec firms have opened branches in Montreal and the largest portion of our valuable deal trade has passed to that city; no ship that can possibly be laden elsewhere comes to Quebec; the leading lines of Ocean steamers have had under discussion the policy of passing here and going direct to Montreal with their passengers and freight. Indeed the Beaver Line has actually taken that course, and the sight of landing passengers in Montreal direct from the Ocean Steamships is now being witnessed there for the first time.

Such being the actual situation here, neither short line, any railway line, or our grand harbor improvement scheme, can be of any value to Quebec, till the rules of the Ship Laborers Society are modified, and this port enabled to compete for the trade that legitimately belongs to it but has now gone to other points, and will continue to drift away. The leaders of the Society, as before stated, think they are right,