

INTERESTING TO WHOLESALE MERCHANTS.

The interpleader suit, *Grothe vs. Pearce*, an action brought by several wholesale merchants in Montreal to set aside the conveyance of the Parry Sound business of John Pearce to his son Milton Pearce, was tried at the present sittings of the Assize Court. The action grew out of the failure of Adair Bros. & Co., of Toronto, of which firm John Pearce was a member. Chancellor Boyd, after a three days' trial, gave judgment on Wednesday last in favor of the defendant in the suit, Milton Pearce. The Chancellor said: "I find that the goods and chattels in question in this issue were not, nor was any part thereof at the time of the seizure by the sheriff, exigible under the executions of the plaintiffs as against the defendant, and I give judgment in favor of the defendant." The case has been fought long and bitterly, and will likely involve the plaintiffs in a heavy bill of costs. We are told that Milton Pearce is now suing the Montreal merchants for \$20,000 damages.

QUEBEC BOARD OF TRADE.

The report of the Quebec Board of Trade, submitted at the annual meeting held on the 13th instant, is a very lengthy document. It contains about 12,000 words, enough to make a full page of an ordinary newspaper. It deals with thirty-four separate subjects. First of these is the insolvency legislation: amendments to the law proposed by the council had been adopted in a bill passed by the Quebec legislature during the current year. It is stated to be the opinion of "the trade generally that bills of sale and chattel mortgage laws should be abolished, in the best interests of trade and of the national credit."

The council have said that the imposition of a tax upon foreign lumber going into Britain, while Canadian was admitted free, "would mean a prompt revival of the lumber trade on both shores of the St. Lawrence." May be it would; but the present council are not likely to see it done, indeed they do not expect it. In matters of freight, it is objected that the Quebec city trade suffers from the incubus of an unreasonably protracted winter tariff on freight by the I. C. R.

Complaints have been made by Quebec merchants that Western millers, principally Ontario men, are sending flour to that market from one to two pounds light weight per barrel, and the matter is referred to the Ontario Millers' Association. The council has remonstrated against the passing of an Act through the legislature prescribing laws for closing stores; also against one to throw upon employers the responsibility of accidents to workmen.

The council aims to make Quebec a free port as regards shipping, and it has petitioned parliament to abolish police dues (3 cents per ton) and hospital dues (2 cents per ton) each time of entering, because these taxes give the port a bad name; that each ship should be at the expense of nursing its own sick crew, and that the Dominion should pay for the river police. A fast line of steamships plying to Quebec, a deep water pier at Father Point Light, are also advocated. The importance of the Quarantine Station at Grosse Isle is urged, and great praise given the Quebec Government authorities for the prompt action taken, which has aroused the Ottawa authorities to take steps to protect Canada against an epidemic of cholera.

"A better and more equitable application of customs regulations at the port of Quebec"

was long ago petitioned for by Quebec merchants as well as outsiders. Some good appears to have come of it; at any rate it has aroused boards of trade elsewhere to remonstrate against inequity in appraisement at small ports. The council opposed the suggested export duty on spruce, saw logs and pulpwood, as also the supplementary tax at one time proposed upon imported mess pork in barrels, the heavy American pork being needed, they say, by the lumber industry.

A long paragraph on the Canadian Pacific improvements at Quebec recites the conditions under which, a year ago, the \$1,000,000 bonds on the old North Shore Railway were cancelled. These included a grain elevator at Three Rivers, improvements on the Loop Line and on the Piles Branch, additions of \$300,000 to rolling stock to be made during 1893-96. The promised C. P. R. elevator and flour shed on the Louise Embankment has not, however, been provided. The Frontenac Hotel, to be built in the city, may be ready for guests during 1893. Further matters referred to are the mail service, the Quebec and Levis Ferry Co., and the moorage taxes. These taxes are objectionable. They amount to \$200 to \$400 a year on a ferry boat, rather than pay which these ferries make occasional trips to Montreal, taking many farmers, besides full cargoes of farm products. The council wishes these taxes abolished, and asks: "How long will the trade community of Quebec tolerate that the export of the products of forty cheese and butter factories in the Saguenay and Lake St. John districts [to Britain] be made from Montreal instead of from Quebec?" No wonder the council considers such a serious anomaly "a breach of common sense in the traders of a locality."

The security of the city and of its trade demand, says the report, serious investigation into the causes of the frequent breaks in the water works pipes, and the means needed to cure them. The report on the subject ordered by the city council has not, it seems, yet been published. Inspection of buildings by a special competent officer is urged.

One of the most important schemes ever submitted to the citizens of Quebec, in the opinion of the council, is the scheme of the Quebec and Parry Sound Railway. This is intended to connect the city from Riviere a Pierre, on the Lake St. John R. R., through the Basses Laurentides, the G.N.W. and the Canada Atlantic railways, with Parry Sound on Lake Huron. This line would be 500 miles long, and with the exception of 110 miles, "is nearly built." It would be "120 miles shorter than any other rail line ending on Georgian Bay," and would "shorten the distance from Duluth, Port Arthur or Chicago to Liverpool by 800 miles as compared with New York."

A long memorial to the Cabinet at Ottawa was made by the board, which prayed that if the Intercolonial Railway should be leased or bought by the C. P. R., the immediate construction of a bridge over the St. Lawrence at Quebec should be a condition of the transfer.

When the election of officers was reached, the gentlemen whose names follow were chosen for the ensuing year: President, V. Chateaufort, M.L.A.; first vice-president, H. M. Price; second vice-president, E. B. Garneau; treasurer, S. S. Bennett; secretary, N. Levasseur. Council—E. T. Nesbitt, T. Brodie, W. Rae, R. R. Dobell, Simon Peters, R. Turner, H. A. Bedard, Alph. Letellier, Geo. Tanguay, T. Beland, C. A. Langlois, Chas. G. Roy and M. Thibaudau.

MONTREAL HARBOR TRAFFIC.

From the report of the Harbor Master of Montreal, laid before the meeting last week of the Harbor Commission of that city, we gather that the sea-going tonnage entered at that port during the season of 1892, was over a million (1,036,707) tons, as compared with 938,000 in 1891, 930,000 in 1890, and 823,000 in 1889. The number of sea-going vessels was 735, consisting of 658 steamers, and 77 sailers, showing as in the subjoined list a steady increase of steam, and decrease of sail tonnage in the last four years.

Years.	St'm sh'ps.	Ton- nage.	Sail.	Ton- nage.
1889.....	522	763,783	173	59,389
1890.....	624	888,189	122	41,143
1891.....	631	903,043	94	35,614
1892.....	658	1,004,396	77	32,311

This list shows that the tendency of steam to supersede sail craft continues. Of the sail craft, 8 were ships, 21 barques, 1 a brig, 4 brigantines, and 43 schooners. The number of inland vessels entered at the port was 5,190, which is more than in 1890, but rather less than in 1891. The Harbor Engineer's report shows the total quantity of earth dredged in the harbor during the year to have been 361,947 cubic yards. The dredging fleet is laid up in winter quarters.

BANK OF OTTAWA.

The growth of this bank's business is indicated by the increase of its totals of liabilities and assets, from \$6,144,000 a year ago, to \$7,184,000 now. Paid capital is \$160,000 larger, deposits \$600,000 greater, and the Rest is increased by \$130,000, mostly from premiums on new stock. In the assets column there is a corresponding increase in specie, Dominion notes and cash assets generally, while loans and discounts reach the large total of \$5,735,000, of which \$22,875 is overdue. The year's net profits have been \$182,705, a very good percentage on the capital and Rest. This enabled the management to carry to Rest account \$65,000 after paying seven per cent. dividend. The directors, we are pleased to observe, propose taking advantage of the Bank Act's provision for Guarantee and Pension Funds, and a resolution authorizing the establishment of a guarantee fund was passed at the meeting. Quite naturally, the subject first mentioned in the bank's report, and foremost in the minds of all who spoke at the meeting, was the death of the bank's late president, Mr. James McLaren. His taking off was a decided loss to the community, and especially to the institution which he did so much to found, and over which he presided for seventeen years. In Mr. Magee, the new president, the bank has an experienced and painstaking business man. We observe that, in consideration of the increased duties of Mr. George Barr, the cashier, under his new title of general manager, he has very properly been provided with an assistant in the person of Mr. Finnie, who was many years in charge of the Appropriation branch.

ITEMS FOR GROCERS.

In a lecture before the Quebec Dairymen the other day, Mr. S. Ayer said: The difficult points were the proper churning and packing of butter. If there is a weak point in Canadian butter-making, it is the packing. The Australian butter reaches England in little square boxes, which are always clean. To prevent the bad effect of brine on the wrapper, they