

A RECKLESS OPERATOR.

An unpleasant sensation has been created in certain circles of Montreal by the coming to light of a series of forgeries of mortgages. The culprit is Arthur Fiset, a Montreal notary, and notarial representative in that city of the York County Loan and Savings Company, of Toronto. This man, by forging applications for loans, fraudulently obtained from that company about \$7,000, but the whole amount of Fiset's forgeries, as related by himself to Mr. W. H. Hunter, a Toronto lawyer, will reach somewhere near \$14,000. He has confessed in fact to about thirty forgeries in all. His methods were as follows: Fiset would forge applications for loans on certain properties, and when the latter had been approved of by the company he would prepare the mortgage, lodge the same in the registry office, and after sending the register's copy to the Toronto registry, the loan company would send a cheque for the amount and Fiset would appropriate this to his own use. The irregularities, or some of them, were found out while Fiset was absent in Paris, having a good time, between January and 1st March. The manager and attorney of the loan company went to Montreal on March 7th to see him, but he left hurriedly for the States. Being pursued to Chicago and Buffalo he was run to earth in Albany and consented to make a full confession. That he was a reckless forger appears from the fact that besides the York County Loan forgeries, Fiset had forged the names of J. B. Pelican for \$2,000, J. H. Christin for \$800, Miss Duckett for \$1,500, and others besides, having forged the name of his brother, Pierre Fiset, as endorser for several small notes of hand. He was a gambler and bucket-shop frequenter. When arrested he only had \$40 in his possession, and had evidently squandered the entire \$14,000 before he left Montreal.

FOR GROCERS AND PROVISION DEALERS.

Nine million pounds of Japan tea, five and a half millions of India and Ceylon tea, more than four and a half millions of China tea, and about a million of teas imported direct from other countries make up in round numbers the twenty million pounds of tea imported into Canada last year. We have compiled a table from the Blue Book, which shows the exact proportions and the cost:

FREE IMPORTS AND VALUE OF TEAS.

	Pounds.	Value.
India black tea.....	1,956,400	\$ 311,219
India green tea.....	62,754	10,068
Ceylon black tea.....	3,303,792	510,091
Ceylon green tea.....	57,167	8,717
China black tea.....	3,247,691	416,734
China green tea.....	1,264,893	141,524
Japan black tea.....	820,016	99,528
Japan green tea.....	8,210,345	1,076,618
Other black.....	491,076	84,635
Total free of duty.....	19,414,334	\$2,659,134
Bought in U.S. or U.K. dutiable	614,730	66,679
	20,029,064	\$2,725,813

The coffee that Canada imported last year came from twenty different countries. Its total value (it is free of duty) was \$442,873, and of this total \$166,020 worth came from Brazil and \$90,772 worth from Venezuela. Great Britain supplied \$82,556 worth; the East Indies, \$30,130; the West Indies, \$30,337; Arabia and Turkey, \$31,281; Mexico, \$96,525; Central America, Ecuador, Holland, Hawaii, Japan and Australasia most of the remainder.

Advises state that frosts in Southern France have seriously damaged the coming crop of almonds. While the production of shelled almonds in France is not of first importance prices in Sicily and Bari are said to have been advanced as a result of the reported loss of the 1899 French crop.

There is lots of new maple sugar selling in the cities, but very little, from all accounts, being made in the country.

The first new Italian olive oil arrived on the California at New York last week.

The butchers report having had a good Easter trade.

INSURANCE MATTERS.

Not only in the law courts but in Parliament there is war between a section of the Canada Life policy-holders and the directors. At Ottawa on Wednesday last, two petitions were presented, one being from the company itself, to authorize the removal of the head offices to Toronto and to give policy-holders representation on the board of directors. The other petition is signed by 177 policy-holders of Toronto and Hamilton, some of them being insured for high amounts, many ranging from \$15,000 to \$25,000 each, and some higher. It finds fault with one director of the company, meaning Senator Cox, casting 578 votes at the recent meeting, and accuses him of rivalry as a director of other life insurance concerns. In view of a number of other matters cited the petition asks Parliament to come to their relief by restoring the proviso which appeared in the original charter limiting the number of votes to be cast by any one shareholder to 40, and to give the policy-holders representation on the directorate and a voice at all the meetings of the company. It will be observed, by the way, that both parties now advocate policy-holders' representation on the board, but while the directors are willing to make the shareholders proportion on the board 9 as against the policy-holders 6, the other party want to have 8 representatives on the board out of a total of 15.

A committee of the Ottawa Board of Trade Council, consisting of Architects Horwood, Calderon, Arnoldi, Watts, Alexander, Building Inspector Pratt, R. Surtees, H. MacLeod, C. J. Booth and Peter Whelen, has been appointed to consider the present fire and building by-laws of the city and make such recommendations as they find necessary. In a council discussion last week the question of local building inspection came up and the general feeling of the meeting was that the present building and fire by-laws are not sufficiently strict—that the city has grown beyond them.

—At the recent meeting of shareholders of the Bank of British Columbia profits of £18,735 for the half-year were shown. Distribution of dividend was authorized at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum, and this absorbed £15,000 for the half-yearly period. The balance was carried forward.

—Dr. Longley, in an admirable lecture upon the "Life and Labors of Joseph Howe," delivered in Halifax last week, urged forcibly that it was time there was a public monument to the Old Man Eloquent of Nova Scotia. There can surely be no two opinions about this. Surely the Legislature of the Province will appropriate a round sum for a purpose of such indisputable propriety. And surely the public will second the example.

—The business done on the Montreal Stock Exchange on Good Friday week—our Stock Exchange letter did not come to hand in time for last week's letter—was not a heavy one. Something like 3,000 shares each of C.P.R. and R. & O. changed hands, and say 1,200 shares Street Railway, but outside these not more than 1,300 shares were dealt in of the stocks in our Montreal list. This week the favorite stocks are higher; Richelieu has advanced and 113½ is offered; Montreal Street Railway is many points higher on the week, 320 to 326 being the range; C.P.R. is also higher. Bank shares are steady.

CLEARING-HOUSE FIGURES

The following are the figures of Canadian clearing houses for the week ended with Thursday, March 30th, 1899, compared with those of the previous week

CLEARINGS.	Mar. 30th, 1899.	Mar. 23rd, 1899.
Montreal.....	\$13,653,749	\$15,353,866
Toronto.....	8,538,812	9,002,516
Winnipeg	1,445,879	1,516,305
Halifax	1,042,716	1,168,564
Hamilton	617,888	713,070
St. John	482,509	610,778
Victoria	624,852	575,804
Vancouver.....	556,866	582,087
	\$26,963,271	\$29,522,990

Aggregate balances, this week, \$4,114,669; last week, \$4,419,186