

## THE MONETARY TIMES

## AND TRADE REVIEW,

With which has been incorporated the INTERCOLONIAL JOURNAL OF COMMERCE, of Montreal, the TRADE REVIEW, of the same city (in 1870), and the TORONTO JOURNAL OF COMMERCE.

ISSUED EVERY FRIDAY MORNING.

SUBSCRIPTION—POST PAID.

CANADIAN SUBSCRIBERS, - \$2.00 PER YEAR  
BRITISH " - 10s. 6d. STER. PER YEAR.  
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SINGLE COPIES, - - - 10 CENTS.

Represented in Great Britain by Mr. Jas. L. Foulds,  
11 Bothwell St., Central Buildings,  
Glasgow, Scotland.

Book &amp; Job Printing a Specialty.

OFFICE: Nos. 64 &amp; 66 CHURCH ST.

EDWD. TROUT, MANAGER.

TORONTO, CAN., FRIDAY, MAY 1, 1885

## LIVINGSTONE VS. TROUT.

A year ago was tried the libel suit brought by T. C. Livingstone, Insurance Adjuster, of Hamilton, against this journal for \$5,000 damages, in consequence of our comments upon his appointment as Liquidator of the Standard Fire Insurance Company. The result was a verdict in Mr. Livingstone's favor for one shilling. In our issue of the 30th May last we commented upon the result of that trial, and especially upon the evidence adduced there of Mr. Livingstone's general reputation as an insurance adjuster. The result was another libel suit, damages being again laid at \$5,000. This latter action was tried at the Hamilton assizes, on Friday last, when the jury awarded the plaintiff \$100 damages. On the trial the jury were directed that the article in question was not privileged because the whole evidence had not been published. To us it seems that the question should have been whether the article was or was not a fair comment on the trial. And on this point, we may say that, such were the care and deliberation with which we acted, we did not rely merely on our own judgment in publishing the article complained of; but before giving it publicity, we obtained the best advice within our reach, which was that the comments made on the subject were well within the legal rights of journalism. The matter was one in which we had no private concern or interest; from first to last our sole object was to obey the dictate of that public duty on which the journalist is constantly called upon to act. If an adverse verdict is our reward, we may take consolation in the reflection that our only aim was to do what we conceived to be a public duty, that neither judge nor jury, though both aimed to do theirs, was infallible, and that the verdict was the result of unintentional—but not the less real—mis-direction on the part of the judge, and misconception on the part of the jury.

## THE FRENCH TARIFF.

Quite recently, the government of France has imposed new duties upon live animals, fresh butchers' meats, salted meats and cereals imported into France from foreign countries. The following is an epitome of

the laws: Live animals—oxen, 25 francs per head; cows, 12 francs per head; bulls, 12 francs per head; young bullocks, young bulls and heifers, 8 francs per head; calves, 4 francs per head; rams, ewes and wethers, 3 francs per head; lambs, 1 franc per head; bucks, goats and kids, 1 franc per head; swine, 6 francs per head. Fresh butchers' meats, 7 francs per 100 kilos; salted meats, 8½ francs per 100 kilos.

Cereals or Vegetable Substances.	Products of European origin or imported directly from countries other than European warehouses.		Products of extra European origin imported from European bond'd warehouses.	
	Frs.	Cent.	Frs.	Cent.
Wheat and spelt, per 100 kilos	3	00	6	60
Wheat and rye flour, per 100 kilos	6	00	9	60
Oats, rye and barley, per 100 kilos	1	50	5	10
Malt, per 100 kilos	1	90	5	50
Sea biscuit, groats, oatmeal and pearled or hulled grain, per 100 kilos	5	50	...	...

The additional duty on goods from bonded warehouses remains applicable to all the above mentioned products. The kilogramme being equal to 2½ pounds, and the franc to about 19 cents (193 by Dominion order-in-Council of April, 1884) this duty on butchers' meat comes to \$1.35 on 233 lbs., or say 58 cents per 100 lbs. On American or Canadian wheat the impost will be about 25c. per 100 lbs. On Canadian or American flour 50c. per 100 lbs.; oats, rye, or barley 12½ cents per cental; malt 15½ cents per cental; 45½ cents per cental for oatmeal.

## THE FUR TRADE.

It may not be generally known that the great antiquity of the fur trade is well established. Upon the indisputable authority of Holy Writ it is clear that no other handicraft can plead seniority over the furrier. In Genesis iii. 21st, it is declared that "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them." The book of Exodus tells of the "covering of ram-skins dyed red," fifteen hundred years before the Christian era. Herodotus, the oldest Greek historian, speaks of those living near the Caspian Sea wearing seal skins. Furs began to be fashionable in England about the 11th century, and a little later there must have been considerable extravagance shown by people in the purchase of fur garments, for in 1337 Edward 3rd prohibited the wearing of furs by all who were not able to expend £100 per annum.

It is a question still debated, how far fur clothing, in civilized communities, is a necessity, and how far it is merely a luxury. Of course there is a "necessity," so-called, which is nothing more than a conventionalism, an exacting rule of fashion, which to those—and they are many—who acknowledge such authority is almost sacred. Every one of us knows or has heard of some lady who pleaded with smiles, aye, even with tears, for a sealskin cloak, urging that it was impossible to appear upon the street, still less possible to drive, and not to be thought of to attend church without that indispensable garment. But then there is the more forcible contention—valuable to the furrier no doubt—that when one has begun the wearing of a fur dolman or a fur coat in cold

weather it is dangerous to leave it off, when out of doors. This for the reason that no garment made of woollen goods can so effectually protect the body from piercing winds or penetrating cold as one of good fur.

Suppose we concede the necessity of fur clothing, (and in Canada there is surely a better plea for this than most countries can make, fashion or no fashion) how can we overcome the difficulty that there are not furs enough to go round? Out of our population of 5,000,000 there are 789,650 married or widowed women; add to these a quarter million of daughters, who, easily think themselves "of age" for such matters. Thus we have the appalling number of a million persons shivering for lack of necessary sealskins, while not more than one in ten can honestly afford to buy them. Here is a condition of things that might well make Goldwin Smith or Leone Levi weep! But the ingenuity of the furrier comes to our relief. Seventy five thousand sealskin jackets, he argues, even supposing them possible to be got, or afforded, would create a horrible sameness, a dead-level of seal brown uniformity of color, in spite of variety of shape in cloak, dolman, jacket, or cape, which must surely cause a reaction, and make the sealskin as *passé* as the mink-skin, if it did not result in the seal becoming as "extinct as the dodo." The arbiters of fashion therefore meet the necessity for fur clothing by permitting the next richest or fashionablest grade of humanity to wear lambskin or dogskin coats, hats, and cloaks, and so on downward.

Sealskins are pretty certain to be in request, and the supply of them is likely to be heavily drawn upon. Prices of large and good skins are fully maintained, since they are alone used in seal cloaks of the better class. But the smaller skins, which are used for the making of caps and muffs, are plentiful and relatively low in price. When we see in American illustrated papers views of men chasing seals in crowds for days on ice floes, knocking them on the head till the slaughter is stayed by exhaustion of the men, we are apt to think of the trade as endless and the supply as exhaustless, but this is not so. Already that territory, almost the only one where the fur seal is got, is being preserved. The Alaska Commercial Company, which pays the United States government \$50,000 per year and a royalty of \$1 per head of seals taken, is under restrictions, and they kill the seal only at the breeding season. The fur seal is never found on the Atlantic coast. The seals taken by the Dundee fleet are valuable principally for their oil; the skins are of very little value, they are very coarse and are known as hair seals.

Persian lambskins, which are more affected by Canadians than by any other nationality, and which come from a district not far off the probable seat of European war, are already this year more scarce than usual, and hostilities in Afghanistan or on the Persian Gulf will render them scarcer and dearer. Astrachans and dogskins, as they are called, being from the like neighborhood, are similarly affected.

But a still further and most important modification, in the interest of poorer folks who are susceptible to cold, is found in