

WARNINGS.

As to the value of Inspectors of Buildings, as at present constituted; on Oct. 20 a terrible accident occurred at St. John, by the falling of the remains of Wiggin's building. Several persons were injured and some killed. That very valuable official, the Inspector of Buildings, visited the scene of the disaster soon after its occurrence. Where was he before the occurrence?

—As to the dependence to be placed on co-operative Life Insurance, the *Evangelical Churchman* says that the Rev. J. W. Kirkpatrick, of Kingston, begs to acknowledge the receipt of one hundred and eighty-five dollars (\$185) from surviving members of the Clergymen's Mutual Insurance League on behalf of the family of the late Canon Preston, a pitiful result of a dependence on a co-operative substitute for life insurance. And yet we some time ago read—"The Superintendent of Insurance at Ottawa has proposed a scheme for the insurance of Civil Service employes, where the system of deduction for superannuation instead of being applied to that purpose, as at present, is to form the basis of an insurance fund, equivalent to two years' salary of the official, and to be deducted monthly from his salary. This is intended as a provision for the widow and orphans, and ought to meet with cordial approval and support." All of which is a snare and a delusion. *Canada Ins. Advocate*.

THE TELEPHONE FOR MINES.—A correspondent of the *Engineering and Mining Journal* writes "I notice you advocate Bell's telephone for mines. I have tried the instrument you lately described, and my experience is that the receiver of a message must be in absolute quiet, no talking, or, in fact, any noise to distract attention going on in the receiving room.

It seems to me that, as at present issued, the instrument could not be used at the pit bottom where the cries of the drivers, the clang of the cage, and the clash of chains resound so loudly. Besides, without a battery, and electric bell, how is attention to be called? If the instrument can only be adapted to convey hoarse shouts loud enough to strongly vibrate ordinary drums, its value would undoubtedly be great, and I think it would be of interest to the mining community to know if larger telephones can be operated alone by the voice and made applicable to the conditions existing at a pit bottom.

TRADE WITH SOUTH AMERICA.—Merchants and manufacturers in this country experience great difficulty in doing business with the South American States, both on account of the poor mail facilities and the lack of a direct steamship line. At present letters sent to this country from the western coast of South America come by way of England, and it takes 40 days. The only direct means of shipping to South America is by means of sailing vessels that usually take a longer time to make the voyage than to send a shipment by way of Liverpool. These limited facilities place Americans at a disadvantage with the English in competing for the valuable trade, and a movement has been put on foot to make better arrangements. It is hoped that if better postal facilities can be obtained the other difficulties will be materially lessened. Accordingly a petition to Congress on the subject has been prepared, and is being circulated for signatures.—*Trade News*.

—A Port Huron paper pronounces the great canal built by the U. S. government at St. Clair Flats, between Sarnia and Detroit, at an expense of millions, to be a great failure. The long expensive cribs, filled in with earth and planted with willow trees, in the hope that their roots would hold the soil against the action of the water, fail to answer the expectations of the engineer who planned the work. Great gaps ap-

pear all along both sides of the canal, and after each storm the signs of disintegration are alarming. There is a constant heavy expenditure of money to stop these chasms. This year 40 tons of marsh hay, 20,000 bundles of barrel stave splinters, thousands of bundles of brush, and a great many fascines have been put into the holes, but as fast as an old one is filled a new one appears. The canal is like the purse of Fortunatus, with the difference that it is all putting in and never taking out. The restless water sucks the sand through the spaces in the timber and deposits it in the channel. A few years ago this was dredged out at a cost of \$100,000. It will not be long before it will be necessary to dredge it again. Singularly enough the old channel dredged out twenty years ago, and left with nothing above water to mark the course but buoys, is as deep as ever, and shows no signs of filling up.

—A Yankee paper says that a travelling man chanced to drop into a store a day or two after a recent fire. The conversation naturally turned to that subject, and he remarked to an old man sitting near by, "I suppose everybody thinks the fire was the work of an incendiary." "Wall," said the old man, "some do think so, but I think it was *so*."

—The school of Arts at Granby, Que., in connection with the Mechanics' Institute is progressing under the instruction of Lt. Col. Amyrauld. There are now twenty pupils, most of them young mechanics in the village.

—It is stated by the *Sherbrooke Gazette* that W. W. Becket sold his silver mine at Brompton for \$20,000. Messrs. Eustis and Leckie are the purchasers.

—A good lesson—Less'n cost.—[London Free Press.

Commercial.

MONTREAL MARKETS.

(From our own Correspondent.)

MONTREAL, Dec. 11, 1877.

Recent failures amongst wholesale people has had an injurious effect on trade, and the air has been full of rumours of further disasters whether with or without foundation it is difficult to say. The dullness in business usual at this season has been more felt during the past week than for the same time for many years past, and until we have good winter roads, no improvement need be looked for.

We have had frost since Saturday last, but nothing severe, and the river is still as open as in the middle of July, the weather has been dull and cloudy with indications of snow.

ASHES.—*Pots.*—The demand has been confined within very narrow limits; in the early part of the week, firsts sold at \$3.70 to 3.75, market closing quiet at \$3.70 to 3.72½; seconds, to a small extent, were placed at \$3.00 to 3.10; thirds are nominal. *Pearls* are very quiet, only a few unimportant sales of firsts being reported at \$4.47½ to 4.50. The stocks at present in store are pots, 1838 bbls.; Pearls, 720 bbls.

BOOTS AND SHOES.—The continued mildness of the weather tells very much against this branch of business. Very few orders are coming to hand, and not much will be doing till the weather gets harder. Meanwhile manufacturers are working upon spring goods. There has been no change in quotations for some time past.

CATTLE.—There was a fair supply at the St. Gabriel market yesterday. Prices favored drovers, and ranged from 4c to 5½c per lb., and

within that range a good business was done; some of the cattle on the market were very fine. *Live Hogs* were in small supply, and the only sales reported were at 50 per lb. *Dressed Hogs* are rather more plentiful, sales from \$5.50 to 5.75 per 100 lbs.; *Sheep* and *lamb*s, \$3.50 each.

DRUGS AND CHEMICALS.—A fair demand for job lots of most articles in this line has prevailed, but prices are without material change. We quote *Bi Carb Soda* \$3.25 to 3.50 per 112 lb. keg; *Soda Ash* 1½c. per lb.; *Cubbear* 12 to 15c. per lb.; *Arrow root* 15 to 50c per lb.; *Borax* 10 to 12½c per lb.; *Cream Tartar Crystals* 25 to 16c per lb.; do *Ground* 28 to 30; *Caustic Soda* \$3.12½ per 100 lbs; *East India Senna* 12½ to 15c per lb.; *Sugar of Lead* 14 to 15c per lb.; *Bleaching Powder* 1½ to 1½c per lb.; *Madder* 8 to 9c per lb.; *Alum* 1½ to 2c per lb.; *Copperas* 1 to 1½c per lb.; *Sulphur* 3½ to 3½c per lb.; *Brimstone* 2½ to 2½c per lb.; *Epsom Salts* \$1.75 to 2.00 per 100 lbs. *Sal Soda* \$1.10 to 1.15 per 100 lbs; *Sallipetre* \$8.00 to 8.50 per 12 lb. kegs; *Blue Vitrol* 5½ to 6c per lb.

DRY GOODS.—The general complaint from all the wholesale houses is that things are extremely dull. The mild weather which has prevailed so long, and the wretched country roads preventing merchants from getting in for the supplies, will account for this. The retail trade are complaining very much, and do not expect now to require any more heavy goods this season.

FISH.—There is very little demand except for small lots. Prices exhibit very little change since the date of our last report. *Dry cod*, \$4.50 to 4.75; *Green cod*, \$4 to \$5 per bbl.; *Labrador Herrings*, \$5 to 5.25; *Salmon*, dull and unchanged.

FLOUR.—Receipts during the past week 14,429 barrels; total receipts from 1st. January to date 789,258 barrels, being a decrease of 99,464 bbls., on the receipts for the corresponding period of 1876. Shipments during the week 9,431 bbls., total shipments from 1st. January to date 738,384 barrels. Since this day week this market may with truth be called nominal, as only a few small sales to the local trade have taken place, and the prices realized can hardly be taken as a correct state of the market in the absence of transactions. We quote the market nominally unchanged. *Superior extra*, \$5.95 to 6.00 *Extra*, \$5.80 to 5.85; *Fancy*, \$5.55 to 5.60; *Strong bakers flour*, \$5.40 to \$5.65; *Spring extra*, \$5.30 to 0.00; *Super*, \$5.00 to 5.10; *Fine*, \$4.40 to 4.50; *Pollards* \$2.75 to 3.00; *Middlings*, \$3.40 to 3.65; *Oatmeal* \$4.70 to 4.75.

GRAIN.—*Wheat.*—Receipts during the week, 13,436 bushels: Total receipts from 1st. January to date 7,241,092 bushels, being an increase of 827,862 bushels on the receipts for the corresponding period of 1876: Total shipments from 1st. January to date 5,823,763 bushels being an increase of 742,479 bushels. As usual at this season the grain market is quite inactive, and the following quotations are nominal. Upper Canada white winter wheat \$1.29 to 1.36; Upper Canada spring \$1.18 to 1.22; *Maise* 62½ to 65c; *Peas* 71 to 73c. per 60 lbs.; *Barley* 55 to 62½c; *Oats* 27 to 29c.

GROCERIES.—The general dullness in trade, has perhaps been severely felt in this branch of trade. In *Teas* we hear of no transactions of a wholesale character, business being principally supplying the small wants of local dealers. What demand exists is for low priced *Japans* say from 25 to 55c for low grades to choicest, blacks are very little asked for holders are asking from 26 to 60c., according to quality. *Coffee.*—In sympathy with the U. S. market is firm but can hardly be quoted higher holders ask for *Java* 27 to 31c; *East India coffees* 23 to 25c; *Maracaibo* 21½ to 24c; *Rio* 21½c; *Sugar* the state of the sugar market has not improved.