

MONTREAL BOARD OF TRADE.

The members of the Montreal Board of Trade are fully alive to the importance of the great meeting to be held in London in a few weeks hence, and, like their French confreres of the *Chambre de Commerce*, are taking active steps to bring the correct Canadian trade view before the delegates of the different Chambers of the British Empire. At the first congress held in South Kensington on the 6th and 7th of July, 1886, the Montreal Board of Trade was represented by Mr. Peter Redpath, one of the then presidents, and then, as now, a resident of London. Sir Donald Smith, M.P., and Mr. Redpath, the former delegate, will speak for the Montreal board in London in June next, but it is an error to suppose that these eminent gentlemen will be alone. The mercantile community of Montreal is so thoroughly alive to the great interests at stake that there is a strong feeling prevailing favorable to sending at least four influential merchants to London in order to talk over the trade question and to compare notes with their Imperial and colonial co-representatives.

The members of the Montreal board remember Sir Charles Tupper's valuable assistance at the deliberations of the first congress six years ago, and feel that a policy or line of action once decided upon by the delegates from the several boards of trade will meet with the powerful aid and co-operation of the High Commissioner, as was the case in 1886.

The committee of the Montreal Board of Trade will meet early in May, when a strong and representative committee will be named for the purpose of suggesting and discussing subjects to be brought before the London congress, and in order to arrive at an understanding on the trade question. This committee will also decide upon the number of representatives to be sent by their board, and it is quite likely that a special meeting of the Montreal board will be called at a subsequent period when the question of Canada's attitude will be fully gone into, and no doubt suitable resolutions will be adopted.

MERCANTILE AGENCIES.

The returns of failures in the Dominion of Canada and Newfoundland for the first quarter of the year 1887 have been made public, and, as usual, they do not correspond. By a strange coincidence, the totals of the number of failures are put down by both agencies at 221, but Dun Wiman & Co. give the total liabilities at \$5,751,927, while Bradstreets give them at \$4,860,210. The former agency reports two failures in Newfoundland, with liabilities at \$11,647, while Bradstreets has none for that island, and in the numbers of failures in the various provinces there are further discrepancies. We have repeatedly called attention to the divergencies which appear in these periodical returns, divergencies which should not exist, if, as the two agencies have, as they contend, equal facilities for obtaining reliable information. We have, for the quarter of the year referred to, a difference of \$988,006 in the total liabilities, a difference of nearly sixteen per cent., and

our merchants and those who employ these agencies have a right to ask for an explanation, and unless a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming, a feeling of uncertainty must result. Hitherto, when these discrepancies have been pointed out, no explanation has been given, the matter having been apparently of no concern, perhaps because there is no money in it. We call attention to the matter, and, in doing so, we would impress upon our merchants that without that reliability, which should be the most prominent quality of such reports, they are really useless. Each will contend that its reports are correct, but the fact stares the public full in the face that either one or the other has made a mistake and that not a trifling one. Mercantile agencies are not philanthropic institutions; they do not labor for the love of the work or for the amelioration of humanity. Their aim is to make money. As they are a necessary evil arising out of the exigencies of extended business relations and that system of credit which prevails so generally, the evil ought to be lessened as much as possible by furnishing accurate and reliable information and none other. We shall be happy to publish any explanations which may be furnished to us on this subject, and we invite the agencies to furnish such information in order that the public may know how such discrepancies exist. We may, and no doubt will, be told that the public has nothing to do with the matter, that the information is not published for the benefit of the public who pay nothing for it, but for the benefit of the subscribers who support the agencies. In that case, the subscribers have a right to know whence these discrepancies arise. At the same time, the public has a right to object to the publication of statements which do not contain the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. — *The Shareholder*.

CONCERNING DIAMONDS.

A diamond expert in London thus discourses on the product and distribution of diamonds: "The Americans are the finest judges of diamonds in the world, and insist upon having the finest stones and the most perfect cutting. It is estimated that they will take three million pounds worth this year. India furnishes a market for large numbers of white stones, as well as for yellow or colored diamonds, or stones with flaws or specks in them. The natives invest their savings in them and in other precious gems as we do in stocks and shares. Russia's fancy is for large, yellow diamonds. China is becoming a buyer, for very recently the empress has broken through the old custom which prohibited women from wearing diamonds in her country. She could not resist the beauty of a superb diamond necklace presented to her. She wore it at court and set the fashion. Japan is also rapidly becoming a considerable consumer. With the opening up of the world by railway and steamship communication, the demand for diamonds has increased marvelously. The world now purchases about five million pounds worth per annum. Twenty years ago, it was about half a million sterling."

FAIR DEALING.

Many storekeepers and clerks have an idea that an overreaching kind of shrewdness is a praiseworthy business quality, and that success in a commercial way largely depends upon this kind of sharpness in dealing with customers. The first effort upon the part of a business man should be to gain the confidence and respect of his customers, and not their ill-will by getting the best of them in a bargain. A customer who once finds himself swindled in buying goods will always be suspicious afterward of the man who swindled him. The dealer who thought himself sharp may make a little money by the transaction; but, in the long run, he loses a good and prompt paying customer, who might have traded with him for many years if he had retained his friendship and induced him, by fair and square dealings, to continue his patronage.

CANVASSING FOR TRADE.

How few retail grocers there are, comparatively, who give much, if any, attention to this important feature of their business. It used to be a popular maxim that all things come to him who waits. That might have been the case in the days of our ancestors, but it is a rule that will not hold good as applied to the merchants looking for customers. Waiting will be of no avail here, unless it is coupled to an active campaign in search of new customers. It is all very well, and absolutely necessary, that the grocer should have a good location, a well selected stock of groceries attractively arranged and polite clerks; but even then one of the most important parts will be neglected if the grocer fails to give attention to canvassing for customers. If possible, he should give this his personal attention; or, what is far better, employ a man of intelligence and good address to attend to that department of his business. Keep him at it, day in and day out, from year's end to the other, and by polite attention and fair treatment the grocer will become so "solid" with his customers thus made that all the wiles and allurements of his competitors will not be sufficient inducement for them to desert the man who knows how to treat them well. Provided that the canvasser is continued at his post of duty. — *Herald of Trade*.

The Post Office at Golden, B.C., is now a Money Order office.

The gold production for Lillooet district for the year 1891 was \$30,091.

The commercial treaty between Switzerland and Italy has been signed.

An assay of Fish Creek ore at the Government Assay Office at Ottawa gave 204 ounces of silver to the ton.

The City of London Fire Insurance Co. has amalgamated with the Palatine Fire Insurance Co., of Manchester.

The works of the Northwestern Mattress Company at Kenosha, Wis., have been burned, also the Kenosha Crib Company's works and the Baldwin coal yard. The loss is estimated at \$250,000. The mattress company had \$58,000 insurance on the works and \$100,000 on lumber.