

The editor of the "Witness" tells us that the water supply is bad, that foul sediment is stored in the reservoir. Now the motto for all waterworks is to keep scrupulously clean the interior of all water pipes and tanks containing drinking water; I believe that there are no clean-out valves on the water mains of Montreal, therefore, the mains cannot have been properly cleaned since they were laid down. We are told that there is putrid matter or foul sediment in the bottom of their reservoirs; if so, then there is similar foul deposit in all the water mains. Why does not the "Witness" call for pipe cleaning as well as the reservoir cleaning? Simply because they cannot see inside the pipes, but can see inside the open reservoir. The pipes have been down a number of years, and the foul stuff in the bottom may be impregnated with disease germs, and will grow worse as time passes.

The end of a very long line of water pipes should be cut, and a full-sized valve placed on it, then a good drain made to receive the waste water; when this is done then leave the valve full open and open the turn-off valve at the intersection with the trunk water main quickly, so that it will cause a great commotion inside the water mains, with the air the mains will then contain, so that the dirt will fly before the body of rushing water to the wash-out valve, and by the time the body of water reaches that point, the interior of the pipes will be clean, and comparatively only a few gallons of water used. If the pipes of Montreal were laid on the circulating system, they should be divided at prominent places where they will be able to flush the longest length of main pipe at one time, in a similar way, as above described. The next question is, why should water, which contains such foul sediment as the "Witness" complains of, be allowed to enter the water mains, Montreal having the very best facilities to hand to filter the water, the cost of which need be no more than one cent per head to build and manage. I believe I can tell the "Witness" where to find the key to the whole trouble that causes the great sacrifice of human life in Montreal, and that is the disgraceful way in which public officers are appointed. It is no secret that positions are sometimes sold at good prices, that men are engaged who know nothing of the business they are appointed to fill, nor do some of the appointees care one cent for the general welfare of the public, who pays their wages. Montreal may have the best and the most expensive appliances put down to perform its public works, but they quickly deteriorate after their completion for the need of reasonable intelligence being displayed by some of its officers, in charge, who are void of skill. In October, 1898, this paper published my description of the Montreal incinerators, and it proves what poor mechanical assistance the city pays for. It is some years since I looked over the water-works, and cannot speak as to any present details, but the complaints named by the "Witness" could be easily and quickly corrected.

The York machinery Co., composed of W. H. Sumbing, J. G. Nicholson and J. D. Bird, has started business at 833 Yonge street, Toronto, as manufacturers of laundry machinery. The firm is now making power ironing machines of all kinds, hydro-extractors, etc., and will make special machines to order for other lines of trade. Mr. Sumbing, the manager, reports that his firm has been very busy ever since the shop was opened.

SOUTH AFRICA, ITS PEOPLE AND TRADE.

CAUSES OF THE BOER WAR.

ARTICLE II.

In our article last month, a brief sketch was given of the beginning and rise of the European communities in South Africa. The history was brought down to the annexation and retrocession of the Transvaal. As there exists a great deal of misconception about the causes of the present war, we shall endeavor to review the main facts.

What led to the annexation of the Transvaal? It was not lust of gold, for only small alluvial diggings had been found as yet, and the great gold reefs of Johannesburg were then as little dreamt of as the Klondyke of Canada. It was because the Republic was bankrupt, the Boers in many districts having refused to pay any more taxes, the country reduced to a state of anarchy by the incapacity of its administrators, by factions bitterly antagonistic to each other, and threatening civil war, and the failure of the Boer commandos to subjugate the native Chief Sekukuni, who was bringing other native tribes down upon the territory, the principal danger being threatened by the Zulus, under Cetywayo. This renowned Zulu King was anxious to pay off old scores with the Boers, who had constantly encroached on his territory, and frequently captured and enslaved his people and robbed them of their cattle and lands. The British Government might have allowed the Boer Republic to find its own way out of its financial difficulties, but when it came to their relations with the natives there was danger that once the Zulu King had overrun the Transvaal, with his 40,000 warriors, he could not restrain his army at that achievement, but it would then turn upon the British colony of Natal, which was neighbor to both, and which then had a white population of only 30,000, against a native population of 300,000. Under these circumstances, and considering that a petition for British intervention had already been signed by 3,000 out of 8,000 of the voters of the country, Sir Theophilus Shepstone, who had been authorized by the Home Government to act as he thought wise, annexed the country, without any force other than a personal escort of twenty-five mounted policemen. The British then took in hand the conquest of Sekukuni, which the Boers had failed to achieve, and then had to deal with Cetywayo, who, robbed of his revenge upon the Boers, now turned sullen towards the British. The next act in the drama was the great Zulu war, which was fought with no help from the Boers, except that given by a single family, Piet Uys, and his sons. These people, forgetting their rescue from certain destruction at the hands of the Zulus, no sooner found this dreadful menace removed, than they began to agitate against British rule. As stated before, they had one real grievance in the dilatoriness of the Imperial Government in granting them a local legislature; but this at last was being framed when rebellion was brought about through the enforcement of taxes, which the Boers refused more obstinately to the British than they had done to their own authorities.

*The Government £1 notes or "blue backs" then sold at a shilling, or say five cents on the dollar, while the salaries of the civil servants were three months in arrears.

[These papers have been issued in pamphlet form, containing a glossary of Cape Dutch and Kafir words and phrases in common use. Biggar, Samuel & Co., 62 Church Street, Toronto. Forty pages. 10 cents.]