

cals used for adulterating purposes, says The Record, may be divided into two classes; one causing irritation of the skin, the other having a peculiar attraction for moisture. It is difficult to say which is the more dangerous of the two. Some people have extremely sensitive skins, and are prone to rashes and eruptions. In such cases, the wearing of textiles adulterated, say, with zinc chloride, would be extremely harmful, producing eczema, and perhaps blood-poisoning. In the case of damp-attracting fabrics, some of them, if examined on a fairly dry day, would be found to contain one-fifth of their weight of water. This is almost inconceivable, but it is vouched for on the authority of no less a person than the Professor of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology at Owen's College. A material of the kind in question might be thoroughly dried before a fire, but afterwards when used in the usual way it becomes damp again, and never dries of its own accord and by ordinary means. It is the duty of merchants to warn customers against the purchase of these cheap fabrics. Textile goods of honest and durable manufacture are so cheap that none are under compulsion to resort to adulterated goods. A little bit of frankness on the part of merchants in this connection will be appreciated by the sensible part of the public.

MUNICIPAL REFORM.

It is a healthy sign to see a portion of the intelligent residents taking interest in the administration of a municipality, and watching the doings of their representatives. Still the persons are few who will unselfishly give their time for such a purpose. We have occasionally seen small groups of citizens in different towns or cities banding themselves together for municipal reform, when taxes became too high, or when some extravagance was being committed by a council. But such bodies do not seem long to maintain an active existence or to attain great numerical strength, for the reason that the public are hard to arouse when the object is civic reform, and the sense of duty in the individual becomes chilled, when it finds no general response, if indeed the individual memory on the subject does not become dulled with time.

Some days ago there was a meeting on Chaboillez Square of the Municipal Reform Association of Montreal, and it was a disappointing one. Not only was the attendance slender—there were perhaps fifty electors present and fifty more persons, adults and boys—but of the twenty speakers advertised to be present, not one-half appeared. Some of the best-known gentlemen, who were unable to be present, however, wrote to express sympathy with the movement, among them Mr. George Hague and Mr. Edward Bond. Resolutions were adopted desiring the electors of the city not to sign requisitions or promise to vote for a candidate whom they do not know to be a trustworthy supporter of a reformed city council; and further to oppose the reelection of any alderman whose record shows him to have been unworthy of confidence. A resolution was passed expressing regret that the City Council of Montreal is levying taxes upon its industrial institutions, namely, by including as immovable property with real estate, machinery used in the factories and work-shops, thereby placing the manufacturing industries of Mont-

real at a disadvantage with those outside of the city, which are exempt from taxation. As this law is driving manufacturers from the city and injuring land and business, the Council is called on to first modify the present law relating to taxes upon machinery, and to secure the amendment of clause 361 of the city charter, so as to abolish all taxes on machinery.

Associations of the kind may serve a good purpose, for civic mismanagement is too common. It is often said that when taxes become so high as to affect the pocket of the town and city voter, he will rise in anger and defeat the man or men who have raised them. But even this will not always work a desired cure. Many voters do not know whom to put in the places of the rejected ones, so as to secure better and more honest administration. But an association of voters, which can inform the individual, having machinery for securing not only information but action, can do much towards achieving reform which is beyond the power of any single voter or small group of reformers.

THE ERIE CANAL.

It is tolerably evident that, as was stated not long ago by the New York Journal of Commerce, interest in the Erie Canal, either in New York State or outside of it, is not yet dead. That journal has published many expressions of opinion, from shippers who freely use the canal, to the effect that it is an important means of transportation in itself, and that it has a restraining influence over railway charges that makes its value beyond that measured by its own tonnage. With the decrease in railway charges the influence of the canal diminishes, and it may disappear, but it is evidently the opinion of many large shippers that it has not yet disappeared, and that it is worth conserving. A shipper who sends four hundred boatloads of general merchandise up the State every season by the canal, says that comparing canal with rail rates, he finds the former about 23 cents per hundred pounds cheaper on first-class freight, 18 cents on second-class, 13 cents on third-class, 9 cents on fourth-class, and 5 cents on sixth-class freight. Mr. Wheeler, of the Cleveland Steel Canalboat Company, considers, and the Journal agrees with him, that the Erie canal must find some way of reaching the traffic of Cleveland, Ohio, in order to develop its full usefulness. His own ingenious project is to load half a dozen canal boats upon a barge, which would be in the nature of a floating dock, and very much as a dozen railway cars are run upon a float for transportation from one part of our harbor to another, and thus transport them from Cleveland to Buffalo.

THE NEW B.C. MINING LAW.

It is regarded as noteworthy by The Nelson Miner that the Associated Boards of Trade, at their recent gathering, passed a resolution regretting that the Legislature of British Columbia had thought it necessary to enact the eight-hour law, which was productive of infinite harm to the mining industry of the province; and also that the Canadian Mining Institute, which has special knowledge of the conditions that go to its success, passes a similar resolution of disapproval and remonstrance. "It would be hard to find two bodies that could declare themselves with greater authority on a question of that kind." The Miner has several bitterly satirical paragraphs on the Eight-Hour law. Witness this: "One paper having said that a million dollars had been lost through the closing down of the Sloca-