

# The Chronicle



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### MONTREAL STREET RAILWAY.

**T**HE negotiations which were to have taken place between the City and the Montreal Street Railway, seem to have become dead-locked. Apparently the aldermen resent the fact that the Company went to Quebec to have a contract made there, which would over-ride the aldermen. It is to be hoped, however, that a speedy end will be put to this dead-lock. In the interests of Montreal, it is necessary that arrangements should be made to settle matters at the earliest possible date, so that the much-needed extensions of the service can be made. It is up to the City to impose a reasonable return for the valuable franchise which it may give.

**T**HE intimation of **THE CHRONICLE**, two weeks ago, that consideration of the Bank Act would be postponed until next session has now been practically confirmed by Mr. Fielding. The Minister of Finance has apparently not given up all hopes of proceeding with the Bill, but in view of the congested state of public business at Ottawa, we do not see much prospect of hopes in this direction being realised. And the Bank Act is so important a measure that there is every reason why revision of it should not be gone about hurriedly. The claims of the business of the country can be easily met by a short act extending the charters of the banks for a year. It will make no practical difference whether the Act is revised this year or next year, but it is imperative that the process of revision should be gone about as deliberately as the importance of the subject warrants.

**C**OMPLAINT is again made of the number of fires in Montreal. During the first three months of the current year, 480 were reported, into which 176 enquiries were held, against 380 in the corresponding three months of last year, with ten less enquiries. It is alleged that this increase is caused by the carelessness and negligence of property owners and tenants. That is possible, but, at the same time, there can be little doubt that investigations into the fires occurring in the City are not as thorough as they should be. For the purpose of do-

ing more effective work, it would, probably, be necessary to strengthen the fire commission staff. It might be a wise move also to appoint an expert fireman to the sole duty of attending fires and ascertaining their cause. The fire department is not as strong as it should be. More men and more equipment are still necessary. And a more thorough acquaintance of the firemen with the various large and hazardous risks, watermains, hydrants, etc., is also essential.

**T**HE situation in Mexico remains unsettled. The revolutionists declare that the recent Cabinet changes and promised reforms will not suffice, and that they are fighting for the participation of their party in Government affairs. To Canadians, the future administration of Mexico is a matter of much practical interest. Large Canadian investments have been made in the country, and for their development a settled condition of affairs is absolutely necessary. The greatest confidence, however, is felt here in President Diaz, and with common-sense prevailing on both sides, it is to be hoped that an amicable settlement will be arranged, so that the development of the acknowledged wealth of the country may be continued on broad and statesmanlike lines.

### WESTERN COAL STRIKE.

**T**HE position in regard to the strike of miners in the Alberta and British Columbia coal fields continues serious, although it appears probable that steps are being taken which will lead to a re-opening of negotiations between the contending parties. There is a likelihood of the number of strikers being added to, it being threatened that boilermen and fan operators will be called out owing to a move having been made at one mine to have them assist in taking out coal for the C. P. R. There is another disagreement in connection with the fire bosses' association. The fire bosses in the opinion of the strikers' leaders are the policemen of the mines, and anything which is calculated to interfere with their perfect freedom of action will be condemned by the miners. Strikes are a foolish way of settling industrial disputes and in the interests of western industries generally, it is to be desired that a modus vivendi should be come to between the contending parties as quickly as possible.