

bably not be renewed, as the Grand Trunk is desirous of having its own line of steamers to carry its freight.

The freezing of the St. Lawrence is more tardy this season than it has been for many years past. And yet the winter began at least three weeks earlier than usual.

The cost of the Ashantee war is already frightening the English people. Appearances likewise point to an exceptional loss of life, by sickness and pestilence.

The two jokes of the season.—Mr. Mathieu's Libel Bill and the Montreal City Passenger R.R. Co's new charter.

THE NEW BUILDING OF THE MONTREAL TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

Amongst our illustrations in to-day's issue will be found that of the Montreal Telegraph Company's new building on the corner of St. François-Xavier and St. Sacrament Streets.

Before proceeding to give a detailed description of this magnificent Block, we think it may be of interest to our readers to peruse a brief sketch of the inception and progress, of the prosperous and enterprising Company to which it belongs.

The Montreal Telegraph Company was incorporated in January 1847 when the science of Telegraphy was yet in its infancy.

Some few gentlemen (most of whom have since departed this life) had the temerity to embark their capital in this, as at that time considered, fanciful enterprise, one of whom was the late Andrew Shaw, Esquire, who became its first President, and retained that office for four years and was succeeded by Sir Hugh Allan who has filled that responsible position ever since.

It may fairly be said, and that without the slightest disparagement to other gentlemen connected with the Company, that its marvellous progress has been due in a large measure to Sir Hugh Allan's great energy, business capacity, and comprehensive views of what the wants of the country were in respect of Telegraph facilities, and to the enterprising spirit in which he, and the different boards of Directors, over which he has presided, have ever been ready to meet those wants. As an instance of the desire of this Company to extend its facilities to even the most remote districts we cannot do better than mention the establishment of the line to Gaspé, and we are assured by persons resident in that district that nothing short of a Railway could be a greater boon than this Telegraph extension has been.

Indeed, it is difficult to say to what extent this Company, while making remunerative returns to its shareholders, has influenced the material progress of the Dominion at large.

Any retrospective glance at the career of the Montreal Telegraph Company would be incomplete that did not refer to Mr. O. S. Wood who was its general superintendent from the commencement of the enterprise in 1847 till 1865, when he resigned. To this gentleman's skilful, careful, and economical management, has been attributable to a great extent its efficiency and consequent pecuniary success, and we may add that Mr. Wood left the service of the Company taking with him the sincere respect and esteem not only of the Directors but of every employé.

On Mr. Wood's resignation, the management of the Company underwent some changes, Mr. Dakers the Secretary, while still retaining that position, undertaking the general management of the Eastern Division, comprising the Provinces of Quebec and New Brunswick, and Mr. Dwight, of Toronto, assuming that of the Western Division comprising the Province of Ontario, and Northern New York, being assisted in their labours of superintendence by Mr. Grant, of Montreal, and Mr. Foye, of Toronto, respectively, and Mr. Bourne was appointed to the duties of Treasurer and Auditor.

At about this same time Mr. Bethune, of Ottawa, and Mr. Pope, of Quebec, were appointed District Superintendents, and this personnel of the Company has continued unchanged.

Our readers may find the following exhibit of the progress of the Company interesting:

	Miles of wire.	Number of offices.	Number of messages.	Number of Persons employed.
1847	\$60,000	540	3	33,000
1873	\$1,500,000	20,000	1,150	1,750,000

In addition to the number of messages transmitted, between eight and ten million words of news reports, are furnished to newspapers in the course of a year.

In 1847, the telegraph extended from Quebec to Toronto, with only one wire. In 1873, the main lines are as follows:

From Sackville to Detroit,	1,800 miles.
" " " Portland,	300 "
" " " Oswego,	300 "
" " " Ottawa district	300 "

and on these trunk routes, the wires are of course numerous, and from these branch out, lines in every direction, until there is scarcely a village of any consequence without its telegraph office. Communication is had direct from Montreal to the following important points in the United States:

New York, Albany, Boston, Whitehall, Utica, Oswego, Buffalo, Detroit and Portland.

It is worthy of note that while every possible telegraph facility has been afforded to the country a steady reduction in the rate of charges has been made.

In the early days of telegraphing in Canada the rates ranged from 25c. to \$1.50, but gradual reductions have from time to time been made by the Montreal Telegraph Company until now messages can be sent to any part of the 1800 miles of territory interlaced by its wires for the small sum of 25c., the only exception to this uniform rate being in favour of places within 12 miles of each other, the charge in such cases being only 15c.

It will, we think, be obvious that we in Canada enjoy under a private Company far cheaper telegraph rates, in proportion to distances than prevail in Great Britain under Government management, and we think also that any one who has had experience in telegraphing in both countries will bear us out in our opinion that we also enjoy a more efficient service.

We have understood that Sir Hugh Allan was greatly instrumental in bringing about this uniform rate. He had a conviction that the Company could earn a fair dividend at the low uniform rate and at the same time confer an inestimable benefit on the country at large and popularize telegraphing

indefinitely. In spite of warning notes of protest and disapproval from every Telegraph Company on this continent his opinion remained unchanged, and he succeeded in impressing his convictions on his colleagues, the uniform rate was adopted and the consequence is that to-day telegraphing from being as it were a luxury has become a common necessary of life within the means of every one.

Having finished our brief résumé of the Company's progress and operation, which we trust our readers will have found interesting, we will now proceed to give a description of the building which is the subject of our full-page illustration.

So far as the exterior is concerned we simply refer our readers to the picture itself and will confine ourselves to the interior. A word or two, however, as to dimensions.

The new block has a frontage on St. Sacrament street, of 110 feet, and on St. François-Xavier street of 65 feet, and we understand that the Company have it in contemplation to pull down their present premises, and re-build, carrying out the same design, which will give the block a further frontage of 40 feet.

The portion of the building to be occupied by the Company as a telegraph office, is 65 feet on St. François-Xavier street by 60 on St. Sacrament, and the remaining portion is to be rented until such time as they may require to take possession of it for their own uses.

We think all who have seen the building itself or will look carefully at the illustration we have given of it, will agree with us, that as a piece of a chitecture merely, it reflects the greatest credit on the architects, Messrs. Hopkins and Wiley, who also we may remark designed and carried out the new Merchants Bank, one of the finest buildings on this continent.

The public entrance is on the corner of St. François-Xavier street, and there is another entrance on St. Sacrament street, which gives access to the general offices, as well as to the public office.

We now descend to the basement by a door on St. Sacrament street, and find ourselves in a large, well lighted room—divided by a counter lengthwise—for the occupation of the Delivery Department.

Perhaps the *modus operandi* in this department will be interesting to our readers.

The messages copied by the operators on the 2nd floor, some 50 feet above, are dropped down a pipe of about four inches in diameter, and land behind the counter, a lad takes possession of them, places a damp sheet over the message and passes them through a pair of rollers which are kept constantly revolving, retains the damp sheet which is a *fac simile* of the message, and hands the original to a delivery clerk who records in a book, the address, and name of the messenger who is to take it out. It is then entered in a messenger's book together with the time of its despatch, and handed to some one of the thirty or forty messengers appertaining to this department. The messenger on presenting the message to the addressee, requests him to sign for it and mark the time at which he received it, and thus a valuable check is placed on the movements of the messenger.

This delivery room being entirely separate from the rest of the basement, we must take to the street again, and go round the corner to an entrance on St. François-Xavier street. We do so, and find our selves in a large room to be used for a store department, whence are to be supplied the various needs in the way of telegraph materials of the 1150 offices of the Company. In one corner of this room we find the office of Mr. Wm. Bowman, who has charge of this department of the Company's service, the magnitude of which may be judged by the fact, that besides the room above described, the Company has two storage buildings, one in Queen street, and one near the Bonaventure Station.

Leaving this room, we proceed to "view" the remainder of this flat, the keepers room, fuel cellars, and the furnace made by Garth.

We may mention here that the building is heated throughout by hot water pipes.

Before leaving this part of the building, we must not forget to note the Baxter Steam Engine, and the uses to which it is to be applied. It is of about eight horse power, and is used:

1st. For sending a constant current of air up a set of pneumatic tubes leading to the top of the building.

2nd. For keeping constantly revolving the rollers by means of which copies of messages are taken in the delivery department.

3rd. For working the hoist which leads to the top story, the primary use of which is we believe to carry up heavy materials for use about the batteries, but which no doubt will be used by many an employé in preference to the long stairway. At any rate we fancy that if we were an employé working in the top of the building, and had to climb the enormous length of stairway occasioned by the loftiness of ceiling throughout the building, and carrying employees was not considered one of its primary uses, that we should be quite willing to be classed as "heavy materials," and,

4th. For moving a small lathe for the repair of instruments.

Now for the ground floor. We might find our way up by the private stairway, but we prefer regaining the street and walking in by the entrance on the corner of St. François-Xavier street.

We ascend four or five steps and find ourselves in a magnificent room, 65 by 50, divided about equally by a handsome screen of wood and plate glass behind which are to be stationed the staff of receiving clerks, entry clerks, &c. The outside portion is devoted to the public. Lining the windows are desks at which customers may write messages. The floor of this portion is laid in black and white marble. At one end of the screen is the office of Mr. W. J. Graham, the manager of the receiving and delivery departments.

We must not forget to notice the Pneumatic Tube arrangements, which are admirably simple and efficient. A small tube about three inches in diameter runs to the Operating Room some 40 feet above. A customer hands in a message at one of the wickets in the screen. The clerk counts it, marks the time of its receipt upon it, enters the address in a book, places it in a small round box, opens a little door in the pipe, puts in the box, shuts the door, the current of air created by the Steam Engine catches it, and presto! it is instantaneously in the operating room.

We now pay a visit to the General Offices on the first floor.

On reaching the landing we pass through a pair of swinging doors, and find ourselves in a wide passage at one end of which we notice a counter at which transfers of stock are to be made. On the left hand side is a spacious Board Room.

Reaching the Transfer Counter we find on the one side of

the passage the private offices of Mr. Dakers the Secretary and General Eastern Superintendent, and Mr. Bourne the Treasurer and Auditor.

Adjoining and connecting with the latter office, we find a large Book-Keeping Room where the Audit staff are to be engaged in the multifarious duties connected with the reception, examination and entry through the books of the monthly statements and remittances received from the 1150 offices of the Company.

The Fireproof safes which are very large extend from this flat to the basement.

Leaving this comfortable set of offices we mount to the second floor and enter the Operating Room. This is a very light airy room 65 by 50, the walls of which instead of being plastered are lined with ash finished in oil which certainly has a very pleasing effect. Here about 40 Operators will be constantly engaged, in taking in at their ears the (to other ears) unintelligible clicking, and turning it out at their pen's points—Queen's English or Queen's French if preferred. This important department is controlled by Mr. McPhee as Manager and Mr. MacKenzie as Assistant Manager.

Before leaving this room we cannot help noticing the admirable arrangement of the wires. Knowing that Telegraph Companies earn their Dividends by means chiefly of wires and operators, on going into an operating room one would expect to find wires and operators in about equal proportions, and indeed this used to be the case, wires running all along the ceilings and sprawling down the walls and requiring constant brushing to prevent their being turned into gymnasiums for spiders, but here to our surprise we see no wires, not even the ghost of a wire. We enquire of Mr. Grant, Inspector and Electrician (whose office by the way is on this floor) and learn that the wires are all run under the floors and are brought up under the tables and hence are kept quite invisible and free from any chance of accident.

The "Switch" as it is called is a marvellous looking arrangement by which any one of the 70 or 80 wires coming into the Office can be connected with any other wire.

Amongst the numerous sets of instruments four are pointed out to us, as the celebrated "Duplex." A technical description of which we cannot pretend to enter upon but will content ourselves by saying, for the information of such of our readers as are not familiar with telegraph matters, that this instrument enables messages to be sent and received over the same wire at the same moment, an operation which to our uninitiated mind looks very much like running trains in opposite directions on a single track with out any sidings. However it may be accomplished, it is of the greatest possible service to the Company materially increasing the capacity of the lines on which it is used to the extent of fully one third.

We now take our last upward flight and reach the top story the ceiling of which has a clear height of ten feet.

We find here the offices of Mr. James Poultie, the superintendent of construction and repairs. An idea of the arduous and important duties of this gentleman may be gathered from the fact that he not only has to see that some 19 to 20,000 miles of wire, are kept in order, but has generally in the course of a summer to look closely after the operations of 150 men engaged in the erection of two or three thousand miles of additional wires and poles.

On this flat we find also the battery room which is as it were the heart and lungs of the concern, and which we need not describe further than to say that it is spacious and complete.

We might have gone still higher by ascending the cupola erected for the purpose of bringing in 50 or 100 lines of the Company, but we content ourselves by just glancing up and noticing the admirable and methodical manner in which the wires are arranged.

Before leaving this portion of the building we were shewn into a small room and found ourselves at the back of a large illuminated clock, the dial face being of the diameter of about five feet, six inches. As this clock will, we understand, be kept carefully correct, it will be a great boon to the public, as it can be seen clearly from the Post-Office corner.

While on the subject of clocks we may add that throughout the building there are dials worked from this large clock by electricity, thus securing uniform time throughout the premises.

In conclusion we cannot help giving our meed of praise to the general airiness, lightness, comfort and strength of every portion of this building, in which it appears to us, that not only efficiency of service, but the comfort of the employes has been looked to, and we think the President and Directors must have recognized the truth not too often recognized by Boards of Directors, that efficiency of service, and comfort of the employes engaged in that service, are very intimately connected. No doubt the President and Directors have the thanks of their employes for the very liberal manner in which their comfort has been provided for, but we also on behalf of the public have a tribute of gratitude and praise to offer them for the liberal manner in which they have considered the public convenience and for the extremely tasteful and elegant addition which they have made to our street architecture.

We, as a fitting conclusion to our article, give the names of those who have been engaged in the work of erecting this building and have brought it to such a very satisfactory conclusion, viz.:

Hopkins & Wiley, architects.

Contractors:

D. Wilson, stone work.

Ward & Cowan, brick work.

John McDougall, iron work.

E. Maxwell, wood work.

Phillips & Wand, plastering.

Garth & Co., heating and plumbing.

H. Millen, painting and glazing.

Prowse Bros., roofing.

E. Chanteloup, clock and other ornamentation.

Messrs. Marcus Ward & Co., of Belfast and London, have issued a number of beautifully illuminated Christmas and New Year's cards, specimens of which may be obtained at Messrs. Dawson Bros'. Some of the cards are got up in fourteenth and fifteenth century styles of illumination, others bear comic devices, and all without exception are designed with much taste and printed with perfect delicacy and accuracy. A novelty in this line is a folded slip, the outside of which presents the form of a book, containing a Christmas carol, words and music, with illuminated border in medieval taste. The cards are by far the best of the kind that we have seen.