

BUSINESS! NOT TALK.

In proposing that hereafter the city council should adjourn at 10:30, Ald. Munro is credited with having made the following sapient remark: "There is no hygienic reason why we should stay longer; even the eloquence of Ald. Humber could not keep people who wish to hear the business of the city transacted, any later." What a pity that this consideration did not strike the aldermen before this! It is the most business like thought that seems to have suggested itself for a long time. If less time be allowed for talk, there ought certainly to be more time for work, and that must be done even should not the aldermen have the opportunity to air their eloquence and get off their little set speeches which, report says, some of them are accustomed to prepare in advance and adapt to any topic that comes up. However, they may find that they are inaugurating this reform a little too late, as the movement for the complete reorganization of the council on business principles, it is reported, is making great headway.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

"WORK or Bread!" is, it is said, going to be the cry of the unemployed workmen in the British metropolis, who threaten to take part in the Lord Mayor's show on the 9th prox, and subsequently hold a meeting in Trafalgar Square.

At a meeting of the London, Ont., Board of Trade, a communication was read favoring some return by the Government to the people in case of loss or damage to registered letters, or packets of any kind. The idea was endorsed by the members, coupled with the suggestion that the Government be asked to reduce the postage on local or drop letters from two cents to one cent.

THE "Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Industries" is the name of a recently formed organization in Montreal, the object of which is to promote the success of the various industries of the Province of Quebec. Such a society would doubtless find a good field for operations in the Province of British Columbia where organized action of the kind contemplated would have excellent effects.

THE Order of Fraternal Guardians another American "benefit" organization has decided to give up business. It was organized in 1880, in Philadelphia, and grew with startling success until the troubles in the Iron Hall and other kindred associations came on. It will be interesting to know how the beneficiaries will come out in the present tangle. This is another instance of the promise to pay \$200 for \$100.

It would seem according to Montreal advices that there is a disposition on the part of American tea merchants to clear out stocks of all available parcels of common Japans, and one large Chicago house has become a purchaser of several thousand packages at prices which Montreal firms evidently regard as high.

These teas have been shipped to Chicago by boat, and as the buyers are credited with being shrewd observers and operators, the transaction is accepted as an indication that values are going to advance, especially as the goods are all of last year's growth.

SINCE the passage of the new Canadian Patent Act there was considerable delay in the issuance of the necessary papers, the necessary models for which it stipulates not having been ready. However, during the period from July 29 to August 24 last there were 483 patents issued, of which 202 were to Americans, 66 to Canadians, 58 to people of Great Britain, and 35 to Germans, leaving only 32 to people of other nationalities. It is anticipated at Ottawa that during the fiscal year ending June 30 last there will be issued a thousand more patents than the annual average.

At the quarterly meeting of the Board of Trade the question of more adequate insolvency laws was discussed, and a committee appointed to wait on the Government and ascertain what remedial legislation the province would be in a position to grant so as to protect merchants against dishonest and unfortunate debtors. On Wednesday the committee waited on the Premier and Attorney-General, who was unable to give them much encouragement, his opinion being that a general insolvency and bankrupt law was necessary, which would have to be passed by the Dominion Parliament.

It was announced the other day, but it was almost as soon denied, possibly in a manner as will satisfy everybody, that the president, editor, and one or more of the directors of a paper published in Westminster were in Victoria seeking to be subsidized with a view to converting their serial into a Government immigration organ. This was followed by the subjoined paragraph in the *Colonist*:—"Mayor Townsend of Westminster denies the statement that the *Commonwealth* are going to start a morning paper. The only connection they will have with it is in their capacity as job printers." Does this mean that once more New Westminster is to have a morning Ministerial paper and that the Kennedy Brothers are not to be allowed to have the field altogether to themselves? This may, too, be a notice to quit to Mr. J. C. Brown, M.P.P.

THE official statement of business failures in Canada and the United States for the nine months ending September 30 shows that in Canada during that period there has been a satisfactory diminution in both the number and amount of commercial failures. For the nine months this year the failures reached 1,287, with liabilities \$9,250,000, and assets \$3,900,000, contrasted with 1,335 in 1891, liabilities \$11,000,000, and assets \$4,612,000. It is worthy of note that in the United States the comparison is quite as encouraging, if, indeed, not more so. There the number of failures for the nine months ended September 30 was 7,375, compared with 8,606 in the same period last year, while

the liabilities fell from \$138,811,000 in 1891 to \$78,971,000 at the close of last month, a decrease of about 44 per cent.; the assets decreasing from \$71,781,000 last year to \$30,200,000 in 1892.

DISCUSSING the question of municipal taxation, the *Winnipeg Commercial* referring to the plan in vogue in the Prairie City, says that "the system is exceedingly unjust, because it compels certain citizens to contribute excessively to the civic exchequer and permits others who should contribute quite as largely to escape with a merely nominal tax or perhaps no tax at all. There is no pretence at equality." Something in this sense was the deliverance, the other day, of the organ of the Single Tax Club, which cited a number of business institutions of more or less importance which were all subjected to the same impost as a condition of their doing business in Victoria. To them the *Commercial's* solution of the difficulty would no doubt supply the remedy demanded, which is to compel all to contribute in proportion to income or profits from their business.

MR. JAMES M. MACOUN, who has been up in the Behring Sea, studying seal life in order to present a report representing the Canadian side of the case, has returned to Ottawa, and is to have a statement ready the first week in December, to be presented to the arbitrators, to whom will be submitted the Canadian and American pretensions. It will be a somewhat curious thing to see how far the findings of the American naturalists, who have also been inquiring into the subject, agree with those of Mr. Macoun. It may be well to remark in connection with a statement published from San Francisco that the American observers had discovered a number of new facts, that Hon. Mr. Tupper discredits the story, it having been agreed at the beginning of the season that nothing should be published until after the reports had been formally presented to the arbitrators. It may be remarked that while Mr. Macoun was in Victoria he knew nothing, he was absolutely as dumb as an oyster.

A CASE of more than local interest is likely to come before the courts in Quebec. A clerk in a prominent dry goods house bought a quantity of liquor, for which he paid by means of a promissory note, which is now due and unpaid. The note has been protested, and the holder has decided to place it in suit. The maker has refused to pay it on the grounds that the liquor sold him was smuggled, and should the case go to court important revelations will be made implicating well-known citizens, including it is said a heretofore supposed upright lumber merchant. So much being alleged it is to be hoped that the authorities will take steps to get at the bottom of the business, even though the parties to the original controversy should happen to arrange matters. In cases like this the Government's motto should be "how to the line let the chips fall where they may." "Upright" commercial scoundrels are far worse than those whom every one is accustomed to suspect.