

at the annual meeting by the chairman of the Board of Directors, appended to the Report on another page, are well worthy of perusal.

#### INSURANCE AND INCENDIARISM.

The New York Association of Super-vising and Adjusting Agents of Insurance, recently in session in Syracuse, N. Y., had before it the report of a Committee on "Incendiarism," which contains statements quite startling. According to the report the purely accidental fires are very rare, while those resulting from culpable carelessness and unknown causes constitute more than one-half, if not two-thirds of the whole number. That is to say, that of the \$70,000,000 of property destroyed by fire in 1877 in the United States, one half or more of this loss was due to carelessness and incendiarism. The report further considers the remedy for this lamentable state of things. It says that much of the blame for the increase of incendiarism is due to the policy which insurance companies pursue. In the fierce scramble for business, many companies have loaded themselves down with risks at inadequate rates, and in their zeal to increase their business, agents have not been careful to resist the attempts at over-insurance at a time when the property insured has fallen much below its cost. These remarks apply with equal propriety to the business and practice of underwriting in Canada.

#### HOTEL BUSINESS.

The twentieth annual report of the Chamber of Commerce of New York for 1877 contains an article on hotel business worth reproducing; it betrays in New York a steady decrease in the patronage from transient guests, and indicates a steady loss of trade in the city.

At a large up-town hotel, where it is possible on an emergency to accommodate over one thousand guests with beds, and where they have had from two hundred and fifty to seven hundred guests every day throughout the several years, it has been ascertained that the following were the recorded figures from 1865 to the close of last year:

Year.	Daily average.	Yearly aggregate.
1865.....	560	205,000
1866.....	600	220,000
1867.....	550	200,000
1868.....	500	187,500
1869.....	460	168,000
1870.....	450	165,000
1871.....	431	156,000
1872.....	420	152,000
1873.....	390	143,000
1874.....	380	139,000
1875.....	360	109,000
1876.....	275	100,000
1877.....	260	94,000

It will be seen by the above figures that the reduction has been steadily and not spasmodically going on, showing that the

travelling patronage of the city has been greatly injured from causes not arising from the hotel itself, which is to day one of the most popular in New York. An inquiry made in another hotel farther down town, that has had, during the thirteen years alluded to, a daily patronage of from 175 to 500 persons, brings out the same results: a decrease in the number of guests and a loss of trade.

Fortunately, Montreal, the chief commercial place of the Dominion, does not present such a discouraging exhibit. Trade does not recede from our city, commercial travellers, country merchants as well as tourists continue to patronize our hotels, and the numerous improvements many of them have received show that hotels in their conveniences must keep pace with the exigencies of the travelling public. Our palatial Windsor has scarcely an equal in the world.

Among the houses of old standing in our midst the Canada hotel is one of those of which the steady increase in popularity is quite remarkable. It has its peculiar characteristics. In the spring, as soon as navigation opens, merchants from the interior or from the shores of the St. Lawrence coming to Montreal for their purchases congregate there, and in the fall, before the closing of navigation, the same faces are seen again in the public portions of the hotel, busily engaged replenishing their stock for the winter season. Year after year, the same crowding takes place. Merchants from abroad, visiting regularly our shores on business, make that house their home for the time being, and gladly resort to it at every voyage. Families at commencements and re-openings of schools and colleges fill up the halls and parlors with a restless flock of children, and pleasure seekers or tourists find therein a quiet house, a resting place after sleepless nights in cars or crowded boats. The reason for such a sustained and increasing popularity is to be found in the uniform and steady management of the hotel; cleanliness, regularity, order and keeping pace with the requirements of the travelling public, have built up for the Canada hotel a reputation which the worthy proprietor will continue to merit by increased attention.

Hotel business in New York is declining in importance in consequence of other centres of commerce supplying the wants of the country around them and making trips to the metropolis, useless to retailers. But, in Canada, Montreal shall always maintain its position as the chief importing city of the Dominion, and her commercial hotels shall continue flourishing and prosperous.

#### THE BANK OF MONTREAL.

Our readers will thank us for placing before them the following detailed reports of the remarks made at the Bank of Montreal annual meeting, which press of matter compelled us to condense in our last issue:

The Chairman, Mr. George Stephen, addressed the meeting as follows:

In asking you to pass this motion I will not trespass upon your time further than merely to offer my congratulations on the improvement in the exhibit, as compared with that of last year, with which we have the pleasure of meeting you on this occasion. The statements be-

fore you show an increase over last year, in the net profits of the Bank, of, in round numbers, \$342,000. Considering the difficulties and disasters by which we have been surrounded during the year, and the generally adverse circumstances under which this result has been attained, we would seem to be amply justified in expecting at last equally good results in future. In other words, that a 12 per cent. dividend may be looked forward to with some degree of certainty. Without wishing to express any opinion on this point one way or the other, we suggest that, in our efforts to forecast and look into the future, we ought not to overlook the note of warning furnished by the fact stated in the report, that, during the past year, the loans of the Bank had fallen off nearly three million dollars. Neither ought we to forget that, while we may have passed the period of abnormally heavy losses from bad debts—I hope and believe we have—we may be entering upon one of diminished earnings. The difficulty of finding safe and profitable employment in Canada for all the means at the disposal of the Bank is more likely to increase than to diminish. With regard to the general trade of the country, it is to me, and must be to you, a matter of regret that the events of the past year have justified the few cautionary remarks which I ventured to make last year. I fear the process of liquidation, which our leading merchants have been pursuing for the last three or four years, must be continued yet a while. There are still too many men in business—too much buying all round, and too much borrowing. All this has to be remedied before business can become as profitable as we should all like to see it. Dr. G. W. Campbell, the Vice-President, seconded the resolution.

Mr. Thos. Workman, M.P., asked whether the diminution in the amount of loans referred to in the report of over \$2,000,000 had taken place chiefly at the head office, or generally throughout the different agencies?

Mr. Angus, the General-Manager, said that he would mention that, and answer any other questions, in a few minutes. The motion was then put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

Mr. Thos. Workman, M.P., then moved, seconded by Mr. Robt. Anderson:—"That the thanks of the meeting be presented to the President and Vice-President and the Directors for their attention to the interests of the Bank."

Mr. Workman said:—"I am quite sure that every stockholder here to-day will vote for this resolution with the greatest pleasure. The results of the year's business, as they have just been shown, are so satisfactory—in fact so unexpected, and so much better than were generally expected—that I am sure every stockholder present, as well as those who are absent, will hear of them with great satisfaction. There was an impression that the semi-annual dividend in June would be less than it is to-day, and even if it had been so, I am sure the stockholders would have been satisfied to accept it. But we find that, notwithstanding the enormous losses that have been sustained by the whole of the commercial community, the Bank of Montreal is able to pay its twelve per cent. per annum; that is two semi-annual dividends of six per cent. each; and only deducts from the balance of profits carried over from last year the sum of \$8,000. This is a result very astonishing, considering the great losses that have been suffered in every branch of business, and to other banks more particularly. Therefore, I am satisfied that there must have been a great amount of care and anxiety displayed on the part of the General Manager, the President and the Directors, in order to secure this very beneficial and unexpected result, and I am sure that the whole of the stockholders will agree with me in the sentiment expressed in this resolution."

Mr. Anderson, in seconding the resolution, desired to say nothing in addition to what had been said by Mr. Workman, but believed that the shareholders were fully satisfied with the management of the institution and its results. The resolution was then put to the meeting and carried.

The Chairman then called upon