

ALDERMANIC COURTESIES.

Some of the scenes in the Toronto city council have been unpleasant reading or hearing for anyone who had a proper regard for the decencies of debate. And the Montreal aldermen have shown often stubborn narrowness or worse, as witness the blocking of a bylaw for fire protection the other day by a solid and continued refusal of ten French members to countenance the expenditure. Still we do not seem to have reached the lower deep into which the inferior house of the Buffalo city council fell at one of their meetings last week. They snarled and fought, blasphemed and grabbed, and insulted one another, says The Buffalo Courier of 29th March, referring to "A Day of Riot" in the Board of Aldermen of that city over the estimates for the current year. After a few preliminary manoeuvres, Ald. Huster called on Divine Providence in a blasphemous way for information about street cleaning. When one member had moved to reduce the appropriation for that purpose from \$150,000 to \$135,000, Ald. Franklin interposed with the remark:

"The contractors are not making any money."

Ald. Huster—"Ah, g'wan."

Ald. Franklin—"I'll bet you \$50 they ain't."

Huster—"Ah, g'wan."

Franklin—"Here's \$50 says they ain't. You can have the contract if you'll take it off their hands."

The two aldermen were shaking their fists at one another, and the chairman tactfully reminded the disputants that there was no stakeholder, and that they were out of order. This same chairman, whose name is Kissinger, at a later stage when a deputation was asking for some money to preserve the banks of a creek that threatened danger to city bridges in the spring freshets, responded classically:

"Ah, you ged o-out."

The fire department estimates of Buffalo, which were \$728,000, were cut down by \$10,400. And when the fire board asked the comptroller for six new steam fire engines, and that officer reduced the number to two before putting the request to council, the aldermen would only sanction one. Likewise they reduced the estimates for several items under the general head of fire protection.

INSURANCE MATTERS.

It will interest many of our readers to hear that Mr. J. Thomson Paterson, formerly editor of the "Counsellor," has come out victorious in his fight against the Mutual Reserve Fund Life Association. It will be remembered that Mr. Paterson was arrested in February last, and held in \$1,000 bail for examination, the charge being that an article written by him was libellous. The statement made was that a large sum of money had been paid to the widow of a former president of the association under an illegal contract. Mr. Paterson admitted that he had written the article in question, but contended that he had done so with good intentions. The article also charged that there had been a considerable falling off in the association's business. In the Centre Street Police Court, New York, last week, the proceedings for criminal libel were dismissed. Mr. Paterson is defending three civil actions for libel brought against him by the association and its president and vice-president, wherein damages to the amount of \$130,000 are demanded. These actions had been on the calendar of the Supreme Court for some time, but when at last they came up the plaintiffs obtained a stay, pending an appeal to the Appellate Division. This delayed the trial of the actions for several weeks until the Appellate Division decided the appeal in Mr. Paterson's favor. It is expected that these cases will be tried shortly.

F. Sanderson, M.A., actuary of the Canada Life Assurance Company, was last week elected to the senate of McMaster University by vote of the graduates in arts. Mr. Sanderson, who has just returned from a trip to the Bahama Islands, is a graduate of Toronto University, and ad eundem graduate of McMaster University.

According to figures compiled by the Marine Underwriters' Association some months ago, but which have only recently been published, the losses on vessels and cargoes on the St. Lawrence route between 1889 and 1899 amounted to a total of

\$10,618,575. The losses are divided as follows: Exports, hull, \$3,463,427, and cargo, \$3,058,609; imports, hull, \$2,569,794, and cargo, \$1,526,745. Divided into localities the figures are: St. Lawrence river and gulf, hull, \$4,423,221, and cargo, \$3,317,404; outside the gulf, hull, \$1,610,000, and cargo, \$1,267,950.

The ratepayers of Indian Head have appointed a committee to look into the advisability of providing engines and other fire protection.

A heavy loss was caused by the destruction of the Russell theatre, Ottawa, by fire this week. The Russell Hotel had a narrow escape. Loss, \$100,000, with insurance of \$63,500. It is somewhat doubtful, we understand, whether the theatre will be rebuilt.—Another fire of the week took place in Amherstburg, where the Electric Light Company's plant was destroyed; loss, \$5,000; partly insured.—At Iroquois also some \$7,000 worth of damage was caused, and several animals were burned to death.

Last week there came up for consideration before the Committee on Banking and Commerce of the Dominion Government the bill to incorporate the proposed St. Lawrence Lloyds'. This bill is to give power to the company to enter into ocean marine insurance and fire, inland marine and transportation insurance, wrecking, and also power to receive aid from any government or person in the construction, equipment and maintenance of the vessels and works of the company, and also Crown lands or other property, and also subsidies, bonuses or guarantees. As was to be expected several clauses of the bill met with severe opposition, more especially that referring to the inclusion of wreckage in the company's operations, which several speakers declared would prove to be against the general interest.

FOR GROCERS AND PROVISION DEALERS.

Preparations are in full swing for the opening of the salmon-fishing season on the Fraser river. Several of the canneries are putting in improved machinery.

Brockville council has passed a bylaw to grant a bonus of \$5,000 and free water to a company of Dufferin county capitalists, who contemplate establishing a \$30,000 pork factory in that town, with a capacity of 1,000 hogs per week. No part of the bonus is to be paid until the factory is in running order.

Four steamships have been chartered to sail from St. John, N.B., this month, and four next month, laden with hay for South Africa. A new system of pressing the bulk of hay has been introduced, by which a ton is reduced from 170 or 180 cubic feet, to about 70 cubic feet.

It is announced that owing to the fact that several of the big Chicago packers have withdrawn their refrigerator cars, the large quantities of dressed beef which heretofore have been shipped from that city by way of Montreal, will go to the Atlantic ports instead. This will be a serious loss to the St. Lawrence port.

A Copenhagen despatch says that a Danish buttermaker has discovered a new preservative which excels everything in that line heretofore known. By means of this preparation it is said to be possible to preserve butter, meats and all kinds of perishable merchandise for almost any length of time.

New officers have been appointed for the T. Lawry & Son Co., Hamilton, as follows: A. Fowler, New York, president; J. J. Scott, K.C., vice-president; G. J. Fraser, sec.-treas., and W. Walker, formerly of Harrison, manager. Anderson Fowler, J. J. Scott and Arthur Fowler, of New York, are the directors. It is the intention of the company to enlarge its buildings in the course of a few months.

Apropos our remarks in a recent issue as to the inadvisability of making fodder cheese, the leading western exporters have put their names to a circular strongly condemning the action of certain parties who have done their best to bring about the manufacture of the same. It is claimed, and rightly so, that there is already enough cheese on hand to supply the markets for some time, and to begin making more in April will tend to still further depress prices.

The "Miowera" on a recent voyage brought over from Australia to Vancouver, a consignment of fresh fruit consisting of