

sion by sailing vessels was impossible. At the same time it seems to us altogether likely that for heavy, imperishable articles, such as lumber, ores, and metals, and perhaps many articles manufactured from these materials, in respect to which speedy transit is of little importance, the old cheap method of transportation may still be retained, even though the average passage occupies from four to six months.

Mr. Troop calls attention to one factor in the computation of the chances of profitable trade with the Antipodes, which has, perhaps, been too much lost sight of. He says:

"In considering the possibilities of the development of the fruit traffic between Australia and Canada, it is necessary to bear always in mind the important factor of the reversal of the seasons. Our winter time corresponds with Australian summer, and our summer finds them in the midst of winter. This means that we can import from Australia when the American sources of supply are exhausted. Grapes, oranges, lemons, apples, bananas, pears, plums, guavas, pine apples, peaches and figs are the principal fruits grown in Australasia. To these must be added a delicate and delicious fruit called the 'passion-fruit.'"

Whether the last-named fruit can be successfully brought over the ocean, even in chilled chambers, is not yet known. But this idea of taking advantage of the reversal of the seasons on opposite sides of the equator, to keep up a supply of fresh fruits the year round, seems to us to be of the very essence of natural and profitable commerce. We know no reason why such exchange may not yet be made to an almost unlimited extent, with great advantage to both parties.

Mr. Troop very properly reminds us, in closing, for the benefit of those who may be disposed to be over-sanguine about the results of encouraging and stimulating inter-colonial trade, that the whole population of the Australian colonies is only about four millions, "and that they are situated thousands and thousands of miles from the main consuming markets of the world. Their consuming powers are, therefore, limited, and their remote situation makes it difficult to relieve a glutted market." The conclusion of the whole matter is, so far as we can see, that while it is the part of wisdom to enter and develop the widest possible variety of markets, and thus have many strings to our commercial bow, it would be the height of unwisdom to permit the hope of increased trade with Australia and other minor and distant countries to divert our attention for a moment from the necessity of cultivating to the utmost our trade relations with those nearer, wealthier and practically inexhaustible markets which lie at our very doors and at the other side of the narrow Atlantic, with people of our own kith and kin. Our commerce with either of these great countries is and must continue to be for long years to come, worth

many times more to us than the aggregate of all that we can possibly attain to with all the other countries of the world.

### MONTREAL LETTER.

A mishap to the plunger of one of the city's pumps, last week, brought public attention to bear upon the matter of the supply and consumption of water in Montreal. The total pumping power is able to supply 18,000,000 gallons per day, while the daily consumption is 17,000,000. Should any of the engines give out, there is a reserve of 30,000,000 in the reservoir to draw from, barely two days' supply. But with the use of turbines the supply is more than doubled, and it was only when these could not be used, owing to some work being done in connection with them, and the breaking down of one of the largest pumps, that the citizen of Montreal was brought face to face with the possibility of a water famine for a few days. The citizen was very much concerned, and with one eye on the reservoir and the other on the cool-headed mechanic repairing the disabled engine, he had an uneasy time of it. But the suspense is all over now and the citizen continues to use the water lavishly and recklessly, with as little concern as if he lived in a lake.

The Liberal party of the Province of Quebec has sustained a great loss in the death of the Hon. Felix Geoffrion, which occurred at his residence in Vercheres, on August 8th. Mr. Geoffrion was born in the town in which he died, sixty-two years ago. He became a notary after a brilliant career at college and soon was one of the most eminent members of the profession. After serving his country in minor offices for nine years he was elected member of the House of Assembly for Vercheres in 1863. He held that position until the confederation of the Provinces in 1867, from which time he was regularly returned to the House of Commons at every election. He became Minister of Inland Revenue under the Mackenzie Administration, but was obliged to resign the office after two years' service on account of a serious illness. Mr. Geoffrion was a brilliant man; a man of tact and general ability and a firm member of the Liberal party.

A legal case which has created much attention came before the Deputy Recorder recently for trial. It was a question between employer and employee and the result, although strictly in accord with the law, carried with it what seems to the ordinary mind undue hardship. The Deputy Recorder gave his judgment very reluctantly: Mary S. Tremblay, an employee of the Dominion Cotton Mills Company, was some time ago taken ill and under a doctor's instructions laid off from work. She neglected to notify the company that she was sick, and although she earned \$10.80 since the previous pay, when she applied for it she was refused payment. At court the defendants admitted that the girl had done the work and earned the money, but when she entered the company's employ she, like all the other employees, signed an agreement that if she did not give fifteen days' notice before leaving, on any account, she was to forfeit \$10 of her wages. The foreman of the company gave this evidence and he also testified to the good character of the girl. The Deputy Recorder considered it was most unfair to

take from employees the money they had so hardly earned. The counsel for the company produced the agreement and asked judgment upon it. The judge decided in favor of the company, at the same time deploring that it was not in his power to do otherwise. Mary lost her earnings and the company got its pound of flesh.

Another case that has occupied public attention was that of the Queen against Norman Murray in which was involved the question of the right of individuals to pass through a procession. Mr. Murray was charged with creating a disturbance on Dorchester street, on Sunday, June 27, St. Jean Baptiste day, by shouting and disturbing a religious procession. Mr. Murray and the procession met in front of the Cathedral of St. James the Greater; the procession passing into the cathedral and Mr. Murray striking it at right angles on Dorchester street. Mr. Murray wanted to pass on his way, and, owing, he says, to a block of carriages, he was unable to cross the street and in attempting to pass through the procession the trouble occurred. A policeman prevented Mr. Murray from getting through the procession on the ground that the latter individual had no right to pass through. Mr. Murray claimed he had the right and the matter was ultimately brought before the legal authorities to decide the case. The trial lasted some days and there were several adjournments. Mr. Murray conducted his own case and some of the scenes in court were something out of the ordinary; the defendant using pretty strong terms to the court and calling one witness a liar. The judge has the case under deliberation.

The streets and parks of this city will cost about \$181,000 for keeping them in proper order during the next six months. Of this amount \$33,000 is set apart for cleaning and watering, and \$16,000 for the removal of snow. The latter item does not include the cleaning of the snow from the Street Railway Company's tracks, and that is placed at \$44,000. Thus it will be seen that the snow is a blessing to the laboring man. Last year some \$50,000 was expended for that purpose and it is greatly due to that fact that there was little hardship experienced in this city last year among those men thrown out of ordinary employment. There were no labour demonstrations here, as in other cities, and the charitable institutions are less taxed than usual. It is an item of expenditure which every good citizen endorses.

A. J. F.

It seems that they have at last succeeded in getting hold of a really effective fibre-extracting machine in the Bahamas. It is manufactured by a Mr. Todd, of New York, and is said to dress the fibre perfectly and with a minimum amount of waste. Although half a ton is all that a single machine will yield as a day's work, the principle is so sound that all that is necessary is to increase the number to meet any required needs. Sir Ambrose Shea points out, however that it does not necessarily follow that the "Todd" machine will be suitable where the conditions of the plant are not similar to those in the Bahamas. The fact of having secured so good a machine should give a decided impetus to the sisal industry in the Bahamas, and we may look for some rapid developments in the immediate future.