

FIRE INSURANCE NOTES.

The burning of the theatre at Nice, Italy, the other day, was a terrible catastrophe, but it is doubtful if even such a loss of life as it occasioned, will improve the plan of such European structures. The French play-wright, Victorien Sardou, writes to the Paris Figaro, and gives as follows the probable outcome of all the grief and horror and indignation and resolves for reform: "Under the impression of the moment much will be talked about the inefficiency of the means for procuring help, the faulty construction of all theatres, and so forth. To-morrow and the next day every theatre-goer who finds difficulty in making his exit will remark, 'What a loss of life there would be if a fire broke out!' The necessity of a special staircase for each gallery will be widely asserted. It will be shown that, under existing circumstances, the public, in leaving a theatre, are jammed into a crowd, instead of gradually making their way out. It will be asked why the police do not see that all means of exit are free and unencumbered, and why roofs of theatres do not consist of a kind of large reservoir, with which to deluge the burning house. It will be suggested that each story should be provided with an iron balcony and ladder to the ground. Finally, when all this talking has taken place, nothing will be done."

A Chicago man recently retired for the night, leaving his hydrant turned on a little to prevent freezing. He woke up the next morning and found that the wastepipe had become plugged, that the water in the sink had overflowed, and, soaking through the floor, had filled a new piano which had been left open the evening before, causing about one hundred dollars damage. The most amusing part of it was that he went to his insurance man next morning and asked if he could make the company pay his loss. The agent told him that if he had only managed to scrape up a little fire he might have collected the amount of the damage. The gentleman departed a sadder but a wiser man.

Arithmetic is an exact science, or ought to be, but if one wishes to try the variableness of simple problems take a batch of policies, all issued at the same rate, the same day, and for the same amount, to twenty offices for cancellation, and just see how the calculation of return premiums will differ. Again, take a long list of items in a manufacturing policy form with various rates, and observe the variation in premiums upon the policies. Again, call on a dozen companies for an authorized deduction in rate upon a live policy, and if any two make the return precisely the same it is remarkable; still the clerks are all correct in their arithmetic.—*Spectator*.

The deacons of a church at Fenelon Falls, Can., putting up a stove pipe in their newly erected building, forced it through the ceiling in the general direction of the chimney and there left it. A fire was made and the stove was used in this way for several days. A good deal of smoke was seen issuing from the roof, and on investigation it was found that the stovepipe did not reach within six feet of the chimney. Now doubt the deacons would have solemnly referred to the calamity as a "mysterious dispensation of Divine Providence," instead of calling it the natural result of diaconal improvidence.—*Chron.*

The agency for this city and surroundings, of the Queen Insurance Company of England, Fire and Life, has been conferred upon Mr. George Graham, and the office is now removed to No. 6 Wellington Street east. Mr. Graham has had some experience in the insurance business in the past, and possesses a very desirable acquaintance with our business men. He should therefore be successful in maintaining for the Queen the good position which that old company holds in the list of companies doing business in Canada.

STOCKS IN MONTREAL.

MONTREAL, April, 13, 1881.

STOCKS.	Lowest Point in Week.	Highest Point in Week.	Total Transac'n in Week.	Buyers.	Sellers.	Average Price, like Date 1880.
Montreal	184½	185½	453	184½	185	135½
Ontario	102	102½	133	101½	102½	79
Consolidated	19	162	184	20	74½	82½
People's	109	109½	330	109	109½	127½
Molson's	149½	149½	25	149½	150	71
Toronto	104½	104½	25	105	105	96
Jac. Cartier	121½	122½	511	121½	122	119
Merchants	142½	143	821	142½	143	99½
Commerce						
Eastern T'ps				90½	91	
Union						
Hamilton						
Exchange				140	144	
Mon. Tel.	124½	127½	1775	124½	124½	94
Dom. Tel.		92	25		93	
Rich. & O. Nav.	62½	63½	1795	62½	62½	42½
City Pass	121	123½	158	120	122½	93
Gas	140½	145½	4447	141	141½	118½
R. C. Ins. Co				56	60	48½

DISCRETION IN MONEY-SPENDING.

As a people we are apt to go to extremes. Before the panic most people purchased all that they were able to get possession of regardless of consequences or ability to make payment. After the panic, thousands of people who were able to continue a prudent expenditure of money for the necessities, comforts and even the luxuries of life ceased to purchase, thereby adding materially to the stagnation of business and industry. Before the panic everybody in city and country seemed determined to rival his neighbor in his mode of living, the furnishing of his house and in improvements upon his estate. A homespun observer in a neighboring State was not far from right when he said that during that period Smith would mortgage his farm to build a house, and purchase a carriage as good as that of Jones, who could purchase without executing such a fatal document. The trouble was there were more Smiths than Joneses, and consequently a large number of farms were heavily mortgaged when the panic came. The Smiths lost their farms or yet carry their burdens, but, says our rural observer, instead of acknowledging their mistake like men they became Greenbackers.

During the past year, unmindful of the lessons of the past, our people appear to be entering upon another period of lavish expenditure. For a time there was need for it, because from Sept., 1873, to July, 1879, most people had not purchased enough to replace the wear and tear. But the same liberality of expenditure is going on. If it is not done upon credit and by discounting future earnings, there can be no objection, provided such expenditures are wisely made. Liberality in expenditure is only another term for prosperity in all departments of industry. Hoarding, while it may for a time give those who resort to it a larger amount of money, if carried into general and rigorous practice, will paralyze every industry, and in time check the prosperity of the economical.

The danger is in unwise expenditure. That is our danger. As a people we love costly and fine things, and will even sacrifice real comforts and solid luxuries for finery and display. There can be little objection even to expenditure in this direction, provided it is indulged in only by those who are able. The trouble is, those who can ill afford such expenditure will recklessly sacrifice their best interests, run in debt, borrow money, and what not to rival those who can purchase whatever they please without involving themselves in debt.—*Boston Journal*.

Commercial.

MONTREAL MARKETS.

MONTREAL, April 19, 1881.

We expected to have had boats reported up from winter quarters ere this, but some very cold days retarded the breaking up of the ice below the "Current." This has now gone, but the river is not yet open to Quebec, the Lake St. Peter ice being still firm. The water is low and fears of a flood are over; it is reported that some boats which wintered at Boucherville could not manage to get out to come up here yesterday. Business continues dull. The Easter Holidays happening during the week, but little has been doing in breadstuffs on 'Change. Hardware is improving and we note an advance in the price of Bars and Tin Plates. Groceries are dull and prices of Teas generally weak. There is also an easier feeling to note in Drugs, Leather and Ashes.

ASHES.—*Pots.*—The demand for the season has been fair but prices are still in buyers' favor, and we now quote the range as being from \$3.90 to 3.95; some heavy tars sold early in the week as high as \$4.10. *Pearls.*—We do not hear of a single transaction; price is still nominal. The stocks at present in store are Pots, 1490 brls.; Pearls, 146 brls.

BOOTS AND SHOES.—Few or no orders being received, but manufacturers are working on the remnants of their spring orders, and in the prospect of a good sorting up trade prices are firm as under *Men's Stoga Boots*, \$2.00 to 2.50; ditto *Kip Boots*, \$2.50 to 3.20; *French Calf* \$3.25 to 3.75; ditto *Buff Congress*, \$1.90 to 2.25; ditto *Split Brogans*, \$1 to \$1.10; *Boys Split Brogans*, 85c. to \$1.00; ditto *Buff and Pebble Congress*, \$1.25 to 1.50; ditto *Women's Buff and Pebble Bals*, \$1.10 to 1.30; ditto *Prunella, Balmorals*, 50c. to \$1.50; ditto *Prunella Congress* 50c to \$1.00.

CATTLE.—There was very little done in the cattle market yesterday, butchers having bought largely last week for their Easter supply and will not require to enter the market before the end of the week. For good butcher's cattle from 5 to 5½c. was paid; rough animals \$4 to 4½ was paid. *Live Hogs* were in good supply and demand at \$7.50 to 7.75; there were four pigs whose aggregate weight was 2590 lbs. found a buyer at 9½c per lb. dressed weight.

DRUGS AND CHEMICALS.—Market this week has been dull, and business quite of a retail character. Prices, although for the most unchanged, are easy; we note a decline in the price of sulphate of quinine. Collections continue good and more activity is looked for with open water. We quote: *Bicarb soda* \$3.30 to 3.50; *Soda Ash*, \$1.70 to 1.90; *Bichromate of Potash*, 15 to 16c; *Borax*, refined, 17 to 18c; *Cream Tartar Crystals*, 29 to 30; ditto *ground* 31½ to 34c; *Caustic Soda*, \$2.60 to 2.75; *Sugar of Lead*, 13 to 14c; *Bleaching Powder*, \$1.60 to 1.75; *Alum*, \$1.90; *Copperas*, 90c. to \$1.00 per cwt.; *Flour Sulphur*, \$3.00 to 3.25; *Roll Sulphur*, \$2.25 to 2.50; *Epsom Salts*, per 100 lbs., \$1.30 to 1.50; *Sal Soda*, per 100 lbs., \$1.05 to 1.15; *Saltpetre*, per keg, \$9.50 to 10.00; *Sulphate of Copper*, 6 to 7c; *Whiting*, 55 to 65c; *Sulphate of Quinine*, \$3.75 to 3.90; *Opium* \$8.25 to 8.75.

DRY GOODS.—We cannot say there is any marked activity at present in this trade. The Spring business has certainly not come up to expectations; the Spring is backward and weather cold, which tells against the sale of spring goods, and travellers are in no hurry about starting on their trips till the weather is more favourable, though some have gone. A