

THE HARBOUR BOARD.—The president of the *Chambre de Commerce* has issued a brochure in which he scores the Harbour Commissioners. While we regard the Harbour Board as deserving of a scoring or scorching, at the same time, we believe that, when the worthy president has had more experience as a Commissioner, his views on Harbour matters will be considerably modified.

It is well recognized in business circles that small committees are the most desirable in the administration of corporate affairs. It is the fault of members of the Harbour Board if, when committees bring in their reports, they do not thoroughly acquaint themselves with the subject under consideration, which has, in all probability, been placed before them in a concise and well digested form in the committee's report.

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WERE THE WRITER A MEMBER OF THE HARBOUR BOARD he would endeavour to place the president of the *Chambre de Commerce* on every one of its committees in order to give him an opportunity of learning all the details of its administration.

The chief engineer of the Board is a most capable and efficient officer. It would be very difficult to find any one who knows as much about Harbour engineering, and such of its affairs generally as come under his official cognizance, as the chief engineer of the Montreal Harbour Board. It is inevitable for some degree of friction and misunderstanding occasionally to arise when the professional knowledge of an experienced official is so much beyond what can be expected to have been acquired by a body of lay Commissioners, however great their ability in their own sphere.

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GAYNOR & GREENE.—At last, after two years litigation, the warrant required for extraditing Messrs. Gaynor & Greene has been signed. They came here to escape facing a charge of robbing the American Government. It would have saved enormous expense to that Government and been in harmony with the friendly spirit which ought to exist between neighbouring powers—the spirit, happily, which does prevail between Canada and the United States—had the writ of extradition been more promptly issued.

Great reluctance seems to have been shown to part with these fugitives from justice, who spent a fortune to avoid being put on their defence before a jury of their fellow country men.

The law of extradition needs amending, it is too elaborate. The fact of an accused man absconding should be regarded as almost a confession of guilt. It is no credit to a country to be a refuge for those who are afraid of meeting a criminal charge in their own land.

A nation is, however, ennobled by providing an unassailable asylum for those who are sought to be made the victims of political tyranny.

THE NEW YORK LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY has had its license revoked by the Insurance Commissioner of Nevada, U.S. The assigned reason for this arbitrary action is an opinion formed by the Commissioner adverse to the president, and Vice-President Perkins, of the New York Life respecting the investigation now in progress.

The Commissioner has given judgment very summarily before hearing the whole of the evidence and before hearing the defence or explanation of the officials whom he has condemned unheard. It is very deplorable that a State official in so responsible an office as insurance commissioner should have taken such an arbitrary, autocratic and wholly unfair a course. Incidents of this nature strengthen the argument in support of the Federal Supervision of Insurance, which would protect companies from the eccentricities of some officials who lack breadth of mind and a judicial temper.

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THE PROPOSED SNOW BY-LAW.—The by-law under which the task of clearing snow from sidewalks would be undertaken by this city, and the cost thereof levied on tenants and proprietors of buildings abutting on the street, seems likely to come into force. This is the right plan, it is the only way to ensure clear pathways and to avoid such conditions as involve the city in damages for accidents.

The details, however, require very great care in arranging, especially as regards levying the cost on tenants, etc., and keeping records of the operations of the brigade of snow-cleaners. There is an opening in these matters for numberless disputes with citizens.

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GROWTH OF INSURANCE IN CANADA.—In a prospectus recently issued by a new fire office, the growth of the premium income of fire companies is given, but two most important facts relating to the business are omitted, which it is only fair, should be made known to prospective subscribers for stock. The total premiums in 36 years was \$201,580,555, and losses paid \$140,309,830. If to the loss total is added 33⅓ p.c. of premiums, which is needed for expenses, the result will show that for each \$100 received \$102 was paid out.

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INSURANCE IS ON BETTER FOOTING.—We hope to-day, as the rates have been raised to be more adequate for meeting the losses that thus the business will be more in accordance with what experience has proved to be necessary.

We have no desire to make comparisons between home and foreign companies, but this must be said, without the foreign fire companies the commerce of Canada would be paralyzed. With a few exceptions the experience of Canadian fire companies has