

London and Port Stanley, the Grand Trunk branches, the Great Western branch to Sarnia, &c. Some of the capital necessary was raised on the spot. The far larger part, however, was got from other parts of the Province and from abroad. The inhabitants of London (we chose this place not because what we have to say refers to it alone, but because it was the centre) indulging in a delusion similar to that under which the advocates of the canal are now labouring, imagined that this expenditure of money was to increase the value of land enormously and to give a tremendous impetus to trade in all its branches. Upon the strength of this expectation they launched out into the wildest speculations in land, in town lots, in merchandize, &c., expecting when the promised Eldorado came, all would turn out well, and everybody would come out with a fortune in his pocket. Though waited for with patience, however, the promised riches never came; then one began to fail, then another, until a crisis came on, overwhelming thousands in disaster and ruin, and creating quite an exodus to the States. In fact it is only now that that part of Canada is fully recovering from the shock which its financial affairs then underwent. Here is a fruitful lesson of the danger of indulging in vague, wild ideas as to what the spending of money is going to effect, which the advocates of the scheme we are considering would do well to study and profit by.

Communications.

WAR TO THE KNIFE.

To the Editor of the Monetary Times.

TORONTO, Feb. 7, 1869.

The number of Insurance Companies doing business in the city of Toronto is not small, and the number of their agents, solicitors, &c., is large. These companies are English, American, and Canadian. Each is seemingly anxious to do as much of the city business as possible—for it is found to be profitable. While I do not quarrel with them for keeping up a healthy competition, I do object to the manner in which the work of securing risks is gone about. I do not intend, in this letter, to give a very elaborate report of their proceedings, but I may be allowed to give a general idea of what is objectionable, by the recital of a few particulars. After the death of Mr. Chaffey, the agencies of the Etna and Hartford, both of which were held by him, were divided, and given to different individuals. Then there was a struggle for the business which he had controlled, and I leave it to the parties concerned to justify their mode of operation. It certainly brought no credit on those engaged in it.

Many of our insurance agents are unscrupulous in word and deed; they do not hesitate to resort to means the most dishonorable to undermine each other; in fact, judging by the character each gives the other, the whole business is conducted by a set of artful dodgers. They stand on the corner of the streets, planning mischief, and retailing slanders which they preface with—"It is said," and "People say." Each professes the most minute acquaintance with every other body's affairs, and propagate falsehoods with their usual accom-

paniment—strict injunction to secrecy. When tired of abusing each other, individually, they attack the different companies.

Then as to the matter of rates. The English Companies charge the Etna, Hartford, and Home with taking risks much below tariff rates; and the Canadian Companies charge both the English (especially the Commercial Union and the Lancashire) and American, with that crime. The Provincial says the Western is ruining business by accepting such low rates, and the Western has charged the British America with allowing an agent not only to go about, abusing the Western, but taking risks below the tariff. I believe the tariff has become a non-entity, and that there is a general scramble for business at any price.

There is much "dog-eat-dog" going on. For instance: A goes to B with a risk; B declines to pay a commission, but is willing to accept the risk. A declines the terms; B therefore hurries off to the individual whose property has to be covered, and behind A's back issues a policy and saves the commission. I do not wish to take up too much of your space this week, but I hope to continue my plain unvarnished tale.

Yours, &c.,

AGENT.

Railway News.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.—Traffic for week ending January 22, 1869.

Passengers	\$22,258 34
Freight	58,826 54
Mails and Sundries	1,978 28

Total Receipts for week	\$83,063 16
Corresponding week, 1887...	65,596 53

Increase

TORONTO, GREY AND BRUCE RAILWAY.—For the first section of the railway from Toronto to Luther, \$470,000 in bonuses are required, of which Toronto has already voted \$250,000, Albion \$40,000, Caledon \$45,000, Orageville \$15,000, and Amaranth \$30,000, making a total of \$380,000, or \$90,000 less than the amount absolutely needed. The municipalities from which it is proposed to raise these \$90,000 are, Vaughan \$10,000, Mono \$50,000, East Garafraxa, \$20,000, and Melancthon \$10,000.

THE NOVA SCOTIA DIFFICULTY.

The Finance Minister's report to the Privy Council summarises the objections raised by Messrs. Howe and McLellan to the Union Act and the decision of the Dominion Government thereon. The first stage in the negotiations was an enquiry by the Finance Minister, which resulted in the following acknowledgments:

1. That the principle on which the debts were arranged by the Union Act operates with some unfairness to Nova Scotia.

2. That in the division of the property, local assets and revenues, or because the assets possessed by her were not of a character to be available, Nova Scotia is less favorably situated than the other Provinces in respect of local revenues.

3. That the increase of customs presses more directly on Nova Scotia than the other Provinces, but this apparent increase and the consequent pressure, it is believed, will be mitigated every year, as goods which she formerly imported from abroad, and which were chargeable with duty, are produced in other portions of the Dominion, and will now be available to her for consumption, free of duty.

4. That she must have raised about \$400,000 annually, by way of additional taxation, if she had remained out of the Union.

5. That the amount raised by the Dominion from revenue from customs and otherwise is about

adequate, if the results of last year continue in future the same, to meet all the current expenditure the Dominion is called on to make on her account, but less by \$100,563, if Nova Scotia is to be charged a per capita contribution to the cost of the civil government and legislation of the Dominion.

6. That the local sources of revenue at present possessed by Nova Scotia are inadequate to carry on the services devolving on the Province.

This report having been submitted to Mr. Howe, he and Mr. McLellan raised certain objections in the interest of Nova Scotia, which objections were made the object of discussion. The result is that the following is the basis of an Act to be submitted to Parliament next session:

1. That the debt of Nova Scotia, on entering the Union, be placed at \$9,186,756, and that that Province be relieved from any charge of interest, unless her debt exceed that sum.

2. That for ten years, from the 1st July, 1867, an annual subsidy of \$82,698 be paid to that Province.

The committee further report their concurrence in the recommendation of the Finance Minister that Nova Scotia be debited, after the completion of the Province building, with interest on the cost of that building, until it shall have been placed at the disposal of the Dominion.

HURON AND ONTARIO CANAL.

The Quebec *Gazette* deals with this project in the following style: Speaking of the late meeting in the St. Lawrence Hall, it says:—

They have of late fomented a constant turmoil among the ignorant masses, whom they marshal with torches, and for any thing we know, with trumpet blare and war-like drum, in procession, to—we shall not say intimidate but—impress the Local Legislature and Government with the danger of refusing the concocters of that wonderful crocheted, the Toronto and Georgian Bay Canal, the modest little sop of ten millions of acres, being, we believe, about one-fifth of all that are left to the Crown in Ontario. It has been demonstrated again and again that the project is the most perfectly Utopian conception that ever proceeded from the brain of a sane man, and yet the wire pullers of the scheme persist to scold, rant and threaten all sorts of calamities to the Government if they refuse to give the ten millions. The \$40,000,000 which Mr. Capreol, the inventor and promoter of the enterprise promises to get from eminent capitalists in London and Philadelphia, have no better basis than reports of verbal conversations and vague assertions on the part of some persons to whom the impressive president and factotum submitted the gorgeous prospectuses, all of course *coulour de rose*.

Commercial.

Toronto Market.

BOOTS AND SHOES.—Prices are steady; little trade doing.

LEATHER.—Business is very dull, and prices are steady as quoted. Hides are also dull; prices are slightly advanced.

FURS.—There is a quiet trade doing at quotations.

GRAIN.—Wheat.—Receipts, 46,799 bushels, against 42,800 bushels last week. The market is dull, and declining under continued large receipts and a slack demand. Spring is dull, and offering at 96c to 98c, with no buyers over 95c; some sales occurred in the early part of the week at 98c; sales, 7 cars at 99c, 10,000 bush. March delivery at 95c in store. Fall is offering at \$1, and several cars of a good sample sold at that price. Barley.—Receipts, 2,590 bush., and 900 bush. last week. The market is firm at \$1.30 to 1.32; holders are confident of higher prices. Sales, 2,000 bush., at \$1.30½ at Hamilton, 1 car at \$1.30 on track, 2,000 bush. at \$1.30½ at Paris.