

vantage of the latter, and admitting how very much behind in all essentials, was our own brigade.

It is no longer possible for the most ardent admirer of our Fire Committee to hug himself in the blind belief that "our fire department is second to none on this continent," for hard stubborn facts, not only prevent his "laying that flattering unction to his soul," but compel anyone, not a permanent resident at Longue Point Asylum, to acknowledge that, on the contrary, Montreal's brigade is the most undermanned, the worst equipped, and the least disciplined, poorest paid, and most inefficiently commanded corps of any city laying the slightest claim to modern civilization; while for the commercial metropolis of Canada, its condition is simply disgraceful. To prove our assertions, we not only refer to the facts given in the last two issues of THE CHRONICLE, but to the great destruction of property for the past two or three years, and the truly lamentable plight in which the fire of the 21st ult. left the brigade. Then, again, look at the whole system from the choice of the men, the anomalous position of the Chief, want of drill, the scanty clothing allowed, the miserable commissariat, old-fashioned appliances, three out of the seven engines being quite unreliable, defective life-saving apparatus, etc.

When we turn to New York and study the rules laid down for the choice of men, the high moral and physical standard requisite in the first instance, secondly the gymnastic training, the drill and discipline to which they are subjected, the salaries, commencing at \$1,000 a year, with the incentive of promotion for good conduct and efficiency, we are inclined to lay down our pen in despair at the Herculean labor necessary to sweep out our Augean Stable—we had nearly written shambles. But as our dear friend, Mrs. Micawber, was fond of remarking, "experience does it," and our great hope lies in the fact that the public at last seem thoroughly roused to the true position of affairs, and when that is the case there is generally a move in the right direction. Let us trust that there will be no half-measures, but that a sweeping reform will be immediately inaugurated; and that the time when puppets of the aldermen are appointed to save our property from the flames will be numbered among the past; that the fire brigade may shortly be placed under the control of paid Commissioners, and commanded by a competent, well-paid chief, having full control and responsibility; that the men may be doubled in number, better paid and better found; that the entire equipment, both of the brigade and the salvage corps, may be materially enlarged and improved. Then, and not until then, will the fearful waste of property be stopped, which will amply repay the expense needful for such improvements.

Were it not for the solid construction of Montreal, we might recently have had a conflagration. The losses of late years have been far above, both in value and numbers, what they should have been; for which the civic authorities,—not the insurance companies—are indirectly, if not directly, responsible. It now rests with the public,—not the insurance companies—to see to it that this is rectified at once; as with our unlimited supply of water there should be no reason why Montreal should not, with an efficient, well disciplined, and properly equipped fire brigade, have its fire loss hazard reduced to a minimum.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

There are five hundred and forty-eight persons entitled to a seat in the English House of Lords. They are made up as follows:

Peers of the blood Royal.....	5	Archbishops.....	2
Dukes.....	22	Bishops.....	24
Marquises.....	20	Scotch representative peers..	16
Earls.....	119	Irish representative peers..	26
Viscounts.....	29	Barons.....	255

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Scotch and Irish peers have not the privilege of sitting in the House of Lords in their own right, but elect representatives from their number. There are eighteen Scotch and sixty-three Irish peers who are not entitled to a seat in the House of Lords. Since the Union, new peers are almost invariably created peers of the United Kingdom. No new ones at all can be created in the peerage of Scotland, and only under certain conditions can any in that of Ireland. The non-representative Scotch peers all hold patents dating before 1687.

The titles under which the present members of the House of Lords sit were created as under:

Year 1200 to 1299.....	6	Year 1650 to 1699.....	30
1300 — 1399.....	4	1700 — 1799.....	131
1400 — 1499.....	14	1800 — 1849.....	143
1500 — 1599.....	20	1850 — 1886.....	37
1600 — 1649.....	37		

Archbishops and Bishops.....

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From this it will be seen that our own times have been very active in the creation of new peerages, more than one-half being dated since 1800. It must be remembered, however, that these titles were not invariably conferred on commoners, but on peers who were merely raised in rank. It is nevertheless clear that but for the additions which are being steadily made to it from the Commons, the peerages would be rapidly reduced in numbers.

Among the oldest existing peerages are the following:

1264 Lord de Ros.	1442 Earl of Shrewsbury.
1264 Lord Hastings.	1442 Lord Forbes, (premier baron of Scotland)
1264 Lord Camoy.	
1307 Lord Dacre.	1455 Earl of Caithness (Scotch).
1309 Lord Beaumont.	1458 Earl of Merton (a Douglas).
1398 Earl of Crawford (Scotch)	1483 Duke of Norfolk.
1404 Earl of Mar (Title was annulled in the time of the Pretender, but confirmed by Act in 1885.)	1485 Earl of Derby.

NEW BRUNSWICK BOARD OF

FIRE UNDERWRITERS.

The twenty-third annual meeting was held at the Board Room, in St. John, 9th January, 1887.

The following companies were represented: Queen, Northern, L. & L. & Globe, Commercial Union, Phoenix of Brooklyn, Lancashire, Scottish Union and National, London and Lancashire, Phoenix of London, Imperial, Royal Canadian, Norwich Union, Western, British America, London Corporation, National, Atlas, North British & Mercantile, Glasgow and London, Aetna, Hartford and Fire Insurance Association.

At the election of officers, Mr. Geo. E. Fairweather (London and Lancashire) was unanimously tendered re-election