

## THE BEAVER LINE RUNS AS USUAL.

Our readers know that, owing to the pressure of excessive competition, the Beaver Line of transatlantic steamships fell into financial difficulties last season and went out of commission. This deprived the port of Montreal of one of its best known groups of steamers—the "Lake Huron," the "Lake Ontario," etc. In short, the vessels, or some of them, came into possession of the bondholders, who probably were no more desirous of running them than the stockholders of the company were, since for several seasons profits have been unattainable. However, an arrangement has now been reached which will place these well-known vessels on the route between Montreal and Liverpool. The first of them, the "Lake Superior," sails from the Mersey on tomorrow, 4th May, and is intended to leave Montreal outward on Saturday, 18th May, to be followed on successive Saturdays by the "Lake Winnipeg," "Lake Ontario," "Lake Huron," so that the house flag of the beaver and the maple leaf will again be seen, as heretofore, on the Atlantic during 1895.

This welcome result has been brought about by the public spirit of a syndicate of Montreal gentlemen, prominent among whom are Messrs. James Crathern, Hugh McLennan, Wm. Murray, Alexander Buntin, D. W. Campbell, the last named of whom is manager of the line. Canadians have reason for congratulation on the fact that people of enterprise have been found among themselves to place these staunch vessels again in commission. There is plenty of testimony to the good character of the steamers, and the rates of passage, both first and second cabin, have been placed at figures that ought to attract a good share of passenger travel. Steerage rates and arrangements outward and inward, too, are such as should secure a fair proportion of custom for this representative of the St. Lawrence route.

## A NEW OCCUPATION.

We do not propose to say anything about the new woman, but a new occupation for woman is a matter which may properly form the subject of a paragraph. It has been suggested by a clever writer that "the utility woman" is a need of the present day; and there are many directions in which a woman of intelligence and pluck, who can put her pride in her pocket for a while, may be of service to her neighbors and put money in her purse. We heard last week of a case in Toronto where a mother and child were ill many weeks of a contagious disease. Each had a trained nurse; the care of the house and the cooking for these two nurses, in addition to the family, for all that time fell upon one maid, who although willing, was not strong. When the mistress recovered enough to leave her room, she found the maid broken down with strain and overwork. "And," said she, "I did so wish for some trusty person I could engage for a few weeks, so as to let my maid go away and have a rest." Here is a case in which a utility woman would be serviceable.

Various directions in which such a person would be a great desideratum are instanced by Harper's *Bazar*. She should be able to be a housekeeper for short periods on short notice, knowing the proper method of conducting a house and managing children. She should know how to manage a butler's pantry through a dinner party. She should be able to help in the care of an invalid who does not need a trained nurse. She should be able—and willing—to look after a child while its mother attends an entertainment. All these services, it is added, should be paid for by the hour.

Further suggestions as to the usefulness of a utility woman embrace the ability to pack a trunk quickly and properly, as when husband or wife, or both, are called away suddenly. Or, again, if handy with her needle, she might help the family sewing in an emergency, as in the case of a lady whose dressmaker had fallen ill and she wanted some one to freshen up a gown for a party. Further, a want is often felt, by city people going to the seaside, of a person who knows how to close up a large house when the family is gone, and how to air it and make it habitable when the family is coming home, as well as to engage servants.

## MANCHESTER FIRE ASSURANCE CO.

The recent meeting of shareholders in Manchester—the seventy-first—was quite unanimous in the opinion that a fire office which is able to build up a reserve fund at the rate of £78,000 annually for the past five years, is one which must be a prosperous institution, likewise profitable. A dividend of 15 per cent. is a good endorsement of the administration of Mr. Moffat, and of the support given him by his board since taking over the business. The report of the directors showed that the net premiums amounted to \$3,787,393.18. The losses, including full provision for all unsettled claims, amounted to \$2,411,420.04, say 63.5 per cent. of the premium. After paying all expenses, commissions, and taxes, the fire account for the year closed with a

surplus of \$120,817. The income from interest on investments yielded \$102,717, and the profit on securities realized \$5,816, giving a balance carried to funds of \$229,351. An interim dividend of two shillings per share was paid in September last, and the directors now recommend a further dividend at the same rate for the past half year, and also a bonus of equal amount, making 15 per cent. in all as against 12½ per cent. in 1893. The capital and reserve funds now stand at \$3,400,275, which is an indication of the financial strength of the company.

## UNION ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

We observe that the report of this old fire underwriting company has been issued for the year 1894. During the twelve months the income of the society was £774,546, being an increase of £121,878 over that of the previous year. And the accumulated funds stood at the close of the year at £2,619,187, being £156,520 more than that at the beginning of the year. The fire insurance premiums of the Union for the year amounted to £402,114, and the losses by fire, including full provision for all outstanding claims, to £223,457, being 55.57 per cent. of the premiums. The total outgo for expenses of management, commission, etc., was £129,945, or 32.32 per cent. of the premiums, making 87.89 per cent. in all. These outgoes having been paid, there remained a surplus of £48,712, which has been carried to the profit and loss account. In the life department, the number of policies issued during the year was 3,542, for a total sum of £1,157,462, the annual premiums on which amounted to £42,247. The total amount of life premiums brought into the account was £272,798, and the income from interest and fees, and profit on investments sold, was £70,813, making the gross receipts for the year £343,611. Against this amount there are the life claims (£155,449), and other charges for surrenders, commission, expenses, etc., amounting to £71,435, making the total outgo £226,884. The life assurance fund now amounts to £1,695,057. It is the Union which has acquired the business of the Eastern Assurance Company, according to a despatch from Halifax.

## LONDON BOARD OF TRADE.

The annual meeting of the London Board of Trade was held on Friday evening last, 26th April, Mr. John Bland, president, in the chair. A pleasing feature of the yearly report was the addition of statistics relating to the city's progress in all branches of trade. It is five years since similar figures were collected. Nine general meetings of the board had been held during the year. The report referred to the prospect of an electric railway running through the streets of London before 1895 had expired. A joint-stock steamboat company had been formed, and arrangements made whereby four large passenger and freight boats running between Toledo, Cleveland and Montreal will call at Port Stanley twice a week during navigation. A wire nail manufactory was established in London during the year, and the inducement to locate there was the superior situation, railway advantages and low freight rates.

The imports into London for four years averaged \$2,507,580 annually, and the exports showed a marked increase during 1894, thus: in 1891 they were \$593,403 in value; 1892, \$678,417; 1893, \$797,382; 1894, the large sum of \$1,036,662. The returns of the inland revenue department showed: Cigars (manufactured), 22,601,745; petroleum 12,835,081 gallons; malt, 4,487,024 pounds; beer, 1,598,870 gallons; tobacco, 8,891 pounds. The excise duty collected during the year amounted to \$365,292.61, viz.: on spirits, \$79,259.30; malt, \$68,089.48; tobacco, \$67,312.05; cigars, \$133,781.49; petroleum, \$12,155.35; other sources, \$4,694.94.

The retiring president, after commenting with approval on the statistics showing the year's business in the city, moved the adoption of the report, which was seconded by Mr. L. H. Ingram and carried. The election of officers for the next year resulted as follows:

President—John Bowman.

Vice-President—A. B. Greer.

Secretary-Treasurer—J. A. Nelles.

The council, arbitration committee, board of examiners, advertising committee, Western Fair representatives, and railway and municipal committee, were elected *en bloc* as nominated a month ago. A committee consisting of Messrs. John Cameron, L. H. Ingram, T. R. Parker and John Bland, will select speakers to handle the various subjects coming before the board. In conclusion, Mr. J. S. Pearce moved and Mr. Cowan seconded a vote of thanks to the retiring president, Mr. Bland, saying he believed in giving honor to whom honor was due, and thanks to those who were deserving of it, to which Mr. Bland replied. The new president, Mr. John Bowman, was well received on making his bow. He referred hopefully to the signs of the return of increased prosperity, as evidenced by the increase in price of such staple products as cotton, beef, wheat, oil, etc.