

The Streets of Montreal.

The aldermen cannot possibly realize the extent of the injury done to Montreal by permitting the condition of its roads and sidewalks to be a matter of general, justifiable, and perennial complaint. While our citizens are, of course, the chief sufferers from the lamentable condition of the streets, our visitors are naturally the chief critics, because most of them are familiar with something better with which to institute comparisons. In nothing is the standing of a city so palpably revealed as in the condition of its streets. No amount of ornamentation and no amount of luxurious or ostentatious extravagance in other directions, will counteract the bad impression created by dirty roads and sidewalks. Always unsatisfactory, the state of the roads becomes intolerable every spring. Making every reasonable allowance for financial exigencies, there can be no excuse for allowing the winter's accumulation of filth to remain on the streets weeks after the snow has gone. A man may plead poverty as a reason for not carpeting his house, but that does not excuse him for having dirty floors. What, for instance, can be the justification for such a state of affairs as we have seen lately on Sherbrooke street, the principal residential thoroughfare of the city, inhabited by many of the largest tax-payers? The mud, doubtless infested with disease germs, was scraped up into heaps and allowed to remain subject to the pranks alternately of the rain and the sun and the wind, for ten days or a fortnight. To open a window in the neighborhood on a dusty windy day was to invite bacilli into the house. The street was an eyesore, an offense to olfactory organs, a menace to public health, and an injury to the reputation of the city. The roads are all to be put in repair next year, they always are to be made good "next year," but meanwhile Montreal's spring cleaning is an imperative duty that should not be neglected for an hour and should be thoroughly performed at any cost. There is common sense in this policy, and there is money in it for the city.

The Irish Exhibition.

The Irish International Exhibition which has just been opened in Dublin promises to be of great benefit to Ireland. It has been started under favourable auspices and is warmly supported by Irish people of all classes, creeds, and politics. What the Green Isle needs above all things is the development of its commerce and industries, and by nature it is qualified to enjoy both on a big scale. If the friends of Ireland on the other side of St. George's Channel, will only look at the situation from this point of view and spend a little money in the encouragement of Irish industries, they will find an investment which will

produce handsome returns in more ways than one, and will tend to relegate some vexed questions to the shades of oblivion.

Railway Companies Responsible for Fires.

By a Supreme Court decision it is held that railway companies are responsible for fires caused by their locomotives through their failure to provide effective fire-guards. The Canadian Pacific having been convicted by the magistrates in two cases appealed, on the ground that penalties provided by provincial or territorial legislative authority could not be imposed upon a company acting under a Dominion charter. The Supreme Court holds, however, that in the absence of effective Federal legislation on the subject, the local law is operative. The question is one of great importance both to the railway companies and to the farmers and it is desirable that the Dominion Parliament should deal with it on equitable lines. It is not in the interests of the public that the companies, should on the one hand be harassed and hampered in the running of their trains, nor on the other hand that they should be tacitly encouraged to negligence in the matter of providing every possible safeguard against fires caused by sparks from their engines. The Supreme Court expressly affirms the superior jurisdiction of the Federal legislative power in this matter.

The City's Real Estate.

A report has been made to the City Council recommending the sale of a piece of land belonging to the city, and the council after a very short discussion adopted the report. In our opinion it is quite a mistake for the City of Montreal to part with any of its assets in the shape of land. Land is so valuable in Montreal to-day and is so increasing in value that the city should hold on to whatever it owns. Perhaps if the City Fathers understood that it was illegal for them to use one cent of the money obtained from the sale of real estate, for administrative purposes, they would not be so anxious to sell. These assets belong to the bond-holders.

The Western Wheat Crop.

The reports that the wheat crop of the West are threatened with serious injury, must be received with caution. They appear to be alarmist in intention even more than in effect. That the severe winter has done some damage to winter wheat, there is no question, but winter wheat forms only three-fifths of the whole crop, and the losses will be largely compensated by re-planting with other crops and by the increased acreage under culture. It is far too early to assume that the West is threatened with anything remotely approaching a crop failure.