

Telegraph Monopoly.

By the consolidation of the American Telegraph Companies two years ago, the whole telegraph system of the continent was placed under the control of Jay Gould, and recent disclosures have gone to prove that cablegrams to Europe may be, and no doubt are subject to the scrutiny of the Stock-King and his associates. It seems that in connection with telegrams from England to the East, the people of that country are in no better position. The Central News Company claim that the Eastern Telegraph Company made use of their messages from Egypt during the late campaign, and violated their privileges as a telegraph company. They have their proofs so clear that they are going to test in a law court the right of the telegraph company to thus manipulate the messages of other parties. The Chairman of the Eastern Telegraph Company is Mr. John Pender, the same who cut such an unenviable figure in connection with the Totness election some seventeen years ago, when that town was disfranchised for the bribery and other crookedness carried on therein. Perhaps his connection with the Eastern Telegraph Company will bring him as much notoriety and as little credit. Evidently he is somewhat of an English telegraph king, and that his monopoly is keenly felt may be judged from the following extract from *Truth*:—"The entire history of the Eastern and Atlantic cable companies is a record of the most astounding and reckless financiering on record. Both of these companies are entirely under the control of the Globe Trust, which has Pender at its head. I am happy to learn that Mr. James Gordon Bennett, of the New York *Herald*, has decided to lay two cables across the Atlantic, and that probably they will be in working order before the end of next summer, as he refuses to be any longer at the mercy of the cable ring, with Pender at its head in Europe, and Jay Gould in America. Pender has managed to crush out or buy up all the Atlantic cable companies that sought to compete with his ring up to now, but in Mr. Bennett I think the ring will find a gentleman not easily crushed and fully determined not to be bought up."

Advanced Freight Charges.

In any country, where freight has to pass over several independent, different, lines of railway there will necessarily be a great amount of trouble and misunderstanding about rates, delays and so forth, and the city of Winnipeg is no exception to this rule. Indeed, consignees here are apt to think that their annoyances in this respect are greater than there is any necessity for. The overcharges and other mistakes of three or four different lines between this and the east have all to be enforced by the C.P.R. officers, and the consignee has no recourse except by the slow and intricate method of tracing back over the different lines of transit. It would be unreasonable to expect that the Canadian Pacific Railway should keep up a regular system of tracing the irregularities of other lines, and indeed there is no company on the American continent, so far as we are aware, which makes any attempt to keep up such a system. During the past three months several

of the lines between Ontario and Chicago, and between Chicago and St. Paul, have adopted a system of mailing a postal card to the consignee in Manitoba, notifying of the transfer and the advance charges, as well as those made by themselves. This has helped matters materially, but it does not by any means fill the bill completely. The consignee has to refer to an array of postal cards to discover the whereabouts of any overcharge, and as all lines between this and the east have not adopted the system, he is liable to discover a missing link exactly where it is most wanted. These postal cards do not always reach Manitoba from distant points in safety, and in reasonable time, and a sectional system like this must be complete to be of any material value.

There is but one way of getting thoroughly over this difficulty, and that is by a freight bill carrying on its face the separate charges of every road it has passed over, and to obtain this considerable trouble in making new arrangements would fall to the lot of the Canadian Pacific R. R. officials, but once completed the system would save them an enormous amount of trouble and annoyance for all time to come. Consignees could then apply directly to the officials of the road by which any overcharge was made, without annoying C.P.R. officials with their enquiries. The initiative in securing this desirable change must be taken by the C.P.R. if it is ever to be put in force, and as they have more or less of a lever on feeding lines from the south, they are in the position to put on a little pressure if necessary. There is a great, and we might say, unnecessary cry of monopoly against the C.P.R., and this is one of the cases in which a monopoly can be used for the benefit of the people of Manitoba. The change would benefit the mercantile and manufacturing classes of Manitoba more than any other, and to these classes the C.P.R. must look for the bulk of its carrying business for some years to come. There may be some trouble in securing it at first, but it would eventually be more for the benefit of C.P.R. officials than even consignees in the North-west.

Smuggling.

The recent discoveries in Buffalo of a well organized system of smuggling of goods from Canada into the United States once more, opens up the question of how to enforce general respect of tariff legislation in the latter country. As was the case in many other pieces of detected smuggling, the parties engaged therein could in some instances be ranked as thoroughly respectable, and the odium in their case seems to arise not so much from being engaged in smuggling operations as from being detected in them. It is a very hard matter now-a-days to get people to look upon smuggling as a crime, and parties who get into trouble by their connection therewith are looked upon by many more in the light of unfortunates. It is only a few years since one of the leading, if not the leading, dry goods house of New York got tripped up in their attempts to evade payment of duties on certain goods, and long afterwards the manner of settling the difficulty between the house and the customs, was made public in an indirect and doubtless unintentional way; and the action

made with an ex-New York senator and the New York Comptroller of Customs, showed, that the offence of smuggling was never insinuated, but that the whole matter was treated as a sort of pardonable irregularity.

The smuggler of the days of our grandfathers, who differed only from the pirate in not being so reckless of life, has passed away, and is now replaced by the wealthy and influential importer, who does not indulge in the rather dangerous pastime of "Running the cutter," but in the spirit of all modern improvements works his business upon a combination principle, the worst results of which can only be the payment of certain money penalties in case of detection.

In the United States tariffs have been put in force during the last twenty years, regarding many of which it was impossible to secure the respect of the people generally, and the enforcement of such by a severe penal code would be folly unpardonable. There is but one way of reducing smuggling, and that is by holding to a system of tariffs in keeping with the actual wants of a country, and not cooked to the order of any clique of manufacturers or others desiring a monopoly. The laws would then have the respect of all well-meaning citizens, and smuggling would again become the calling of the desperado, instead of the study of the importer.

Fire Insurance in the United States.

This history has yet to be written; but we will cite a few facts known to survivors. The great fire of 1833 in New York destroyed nineteen companies and nearly \$29,000,000 of insurance capital. Ten years after in 1845, in the same city another fire wiped out upwards of \$4,000,000 capital. In the twenty subsequent years, new home companies, with many from abroad, entered into active competition, occasionally drawn together through the effects of the Albany fire in 1848, the St. Louis fire in 1849, the San Francisco fires of 1850 and 1851, The Troy and other lesser conflagrations; so that at the close of 1865 forty-six out of 145 companies, doing business in the State of New York reported an impairment of \$1,313,602 and the results are well shown by President Heald in his annual address before the National Board of Fire Underwriters, May, 1882. President Heald presented in his usual vigorous style a statistical review of twenty-two years business from which we make frequent extracts herein.

The business at this time—1865—had become thoroughly demoralized; competition was excessive, and the losses and expenses had eaten up 99 3-4 per cent. of the sum total of premium receipts; 1866 gave early indications of the outcome of a year whose losses and expenses footed up 104 10-100 on its entire premium receipts. Under such conditions the preliminary measures were taken in June 1866 for the organization of the National Board which was fully accomplished in the following month, after the Portland fire had empedized by a loss of \$10,000,000 and wiping away three and a half million of insurance capital. Under the conservative conduct of the business, the ratio of losses to premiums fell from 58 51-100 per cent. in the six years—1860 to 1865 inclusive—