

the number of offices to 492. It is probable, however, that the closing of various offices of the Atlantic and Pacific telegraph in the United States, in pursuance of a pooling arrangement that the company had made with the Western Union, had to do with this decline of earnings. Working expenses were in that year \$122,245, a decrease of \$2,152. That the larger company was feeling the effect of keen competition at a low tariff for long distances is shown by the fact that it agreed to a conference on the subject of a reduction of expense to both companies by pooling their gross earnings while maintaining their independent organizations. Under this plan it was proposed to establish a joint telegraph office at each place where duplicate offices were unnecessary, the agents at such joint offices to be equally the servants of both organizations, under instructions of a joint committee. As the two companies could not agree upon terms of such a division, it was decided to refer the matter to Captain Mayne, R.N., but nothing came of the effort at pooling, the Montreal company declining to accept Capt. Mayne's award of 70 per cent. of the business to that company and 30 to the other. A written assurance had been given to the Dominion Co. by the Atlantic & Pacific Co., its United States' connection, to the effect that the former should not suffer by the amalgamation which the latter now proposed with the Western Union, its great antagonist in the States. But the very contingency against which it had been guaranteed would not seem to have arisen. Both of the Canadian companies were struggling with extensive lines, heavy expenses and inadequate rates of tolls. The shares of the Dominion Company had fallen below 60 and those of the Montreal were barely above par when there took the field in the United States a formidable rival telegraph company, among whose promoters were Jay Gould, Russell Sage and Col. Tom Scott.

The new comer, the American Union, made a proposal to lease the wires of the Dominion Company for ninety-nine years at rate to equal five per cent. on its paid-up capital, and the proposal was accepted. This gave the American Union Company an important Canadian connection, and enabled it to compete on something like even terms in respect of Canadian business with the Western Union, whose friends and allies in Canada were the Montreal Telegraph Co. The new combination evidently meant fight, for on 6th October, 1879, the rates of telegrams in Canada were put down from 25 cents to 20 cents on the 390 offices of the Dominion Company. Next day the Montreal Company also put down its rates at 1,500 offices to 20 cents for ten words. The American Union had made a reduction in its rates of tolls in the States and the Western Union followed suit. It was in February, 1881, that the consolidation took place of the three great telegraph companies in United States, viz., the Western Union, the American Union and the Atlantic and Pacific, and an issue of eighty millions stock was made by Western Union.

#### LEATHER.

It is long since the producers of leather have had anything like what our American friends would call a "soft time." Tanners have been working for years upon a very narrow margin of possible profit; and even the present extremely low price of hides does not help them as it ought, because the difference between price of hides and relative price of leather is too slight for money-making. We are told

that manufacturers of boots and shoes are at present holding back from purchasing, but that stocks of sole leather in hands of tanners and dealers are low. This state of stocks is probably a result of the agreement by Canadian tanners to curtail production, which we have repeatedly noticed. As to upper, stocks are limited compared to what they have been, but the present is a dull season, sales to the out-lets being usually made in spring.

A marked change has come to the trade in recent years in respect of upper, and of waxed calf as well, in the production of Dongola and of Cordovan leathers, and in the extraordinary run which colored leathers for uppers have had upon the market. The use of brown and yellow leathers has very decidedly affected the out-put of black, whether cowhide or calfskin, domestic or imported. It is observable that these novel tan or brown leathers are being worn for fall to an unexpected degree, and it may be that we shall see colored calf worn in the dark shades even in winter. A black calf shoe "shined up" with ordinary blackening loses its sheen with a touch of snow or rain. These brown calf goods, on the other hand, can be wiped off with a sponge without causing a dude to lose his self-possession by the consciousness that the shine is gone from his feet. Preparations known as Miltonian cream, a London production, and Russian tan dressing, presumably adapted for these special makes of colored leather, are now to be had, and, we are told, preserve the polish of the leather.

#### OUR CALENDAR.

The editor of a New York contemporary seems to have anticipated our intention of suggesting to merchants the advisability of giving their customers a holiday souvenir. Our Souvenir Calendar, which accompanies to-day's MONETARY TIMES, was already on the press when we read the following in the *Dry Goods Chronicle* of the 12th inst.:-

"This is the time of the year for merchants to prepare neat cards, with a calendar of the new year, to give to their trade as a souvenir. . . . Use all means to get them to your store. When any one buys an article in your store and is suited, he is sure to come again. When you send them something useful, such as a calendar, handsomely gotten up, or some other little memento, you enlist their attention and they feel your consideration on their behalf."

We think our suggestion will prove a profitable one to the merchant adopting it. The calendar is in good taste, does not cost much and customers appreciate these little attentions, on the part of a tradesman, especially at such a time as Christmas.

#### VANCOUVER AND THE KOOTENAY.

The Vancouver Board of Trade held a meeting the other day mainly to consider the prospects of directing towards that city the trade of the Kootenay country. It was stated by Mr. Thomas Dunn that the ore was now going south to United States smelters, and trade was going the same way. James Wardner, of the Freddy Lee mine, which was now turning out ten tons a day, thought the ore should come to Vancouver, but it could not without a road. He would send it via Vancouver to Tacoma for the present. The want now was a road to the head of Arrow Lake. The people of Kaslo had built a road. The C. P. R. and the Government should be memorialized to build the road from Nakusp. The co-operation of the Boards of Trade of

New Westminster and Victoria should be secured in this matter, and the trade should not be thrown away because of apathy in building eighteen miles of road, costing, according to Frank Fletcher, some \$7,000.

An independent note was struck by Mr. H. T. Ceperley, who thought that they should memorialize less and do something practical. Vancouver, Victoria and New Westminster should contribute as a people and depend less on the C. P. R. and the Government. He could say for Americans that if they discovered ore they would find a way to get it out.

After some further remarks from the president, Mr. Salisbury, Col. Tracy, Mr. McLagan and others, it was moved by Capt. Tatlow and seconded by Thos. Dunn, and carried unanimously, "That this board feeling the urgency of taking immediate steps to secure to the province the trade of the mining districts of the interior and the Slokan in particular, would urge upon the Provincial Government and Canadian Pacific Railway the necessity of giving that district better means of communication by means of a wagon road from Slokan to Arrow lakes, until such time as a railway can be constructed, and that the president be requested to communicate with the Provincial Government and the president of the C. P. R. to this effect, and that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Hon. Mr. Davie, the Premier at Ottawa, and Mr. Van Horne."

It was also moved by Messrs. Cotton and McLagan and carried that the boards of New Westminster, Nanaimo and Victoria be asked to unite in urging the carrying out of the foregoing resolution.

#### NEW WESTMINSTER WATER-WORKS

We hasten to make amends to the good people of New Westminster, B.C., for having suggested by the wording of a recent paragraph that the \$75,000 which they recently voted towards water-works for that city was to cover the whole expense of the system. The sum then voted was only supplementary to nearly \$400,000 already expended for the purpose. The facts are these: The water-works system of New Westminster is owned by that city; construction was begun several years ago and finished during the past summer; water is brought from Lake Coquitlam, in the mountains above the city, which is unsurpassed in quality in the world and icy cold at all seasons of the year, the banks of the lake being so precipitous that contamination of its waters is impossible. The system used is that of gravitation, so that while there is no expensive pumping a pressure of 165 to 175 pounds is constantly maintained in the mains in the business part of the city. The main conduit is seventeen miles in length, and there is some twenty miles of distributing pipe laid through nearly every street. Rates charged for water are low and almost every household uses it. As a correspondent puts it: "People here are proud of the water-works, and they have every right to be. It is as perfect a system in every respect as it is possible to make. Fire insurance authorities are now re-rating the city by reason of its completion." We are indebted to the *Columbian* for pointing out the slip of the pen to which exception is very properly taken, and to a local correspondent for enabling us to give particulars of this very complete water-works system. The amount expended on them up to 4th November was \$397,800, and the sum of \$75,000 voted was required to pay further obligations incurred in connection with them.