

STOCKS.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE MARKET.

Bank of Montreal.

The transactions in this stock were very much larger than are usual in the opening month of the year, notwithstanding the stringency in the money market at that period. Prices fluctuated from day to day, the sales on the 2nd being at 252½ to 254, up to 256 on the 3rd; was irregular for some days, touching 272½ on the 8th, receded on the same day to 268, and up again on the 9th to 276. There was less spirit, however, in the market until the 15th, prices dropping suddenly, the bulk of the sales being at 270 down to 267½, the new and old shares being on the 16th equal in value, and opening with sales at 235, a light business being done at 234 to 237½ until the 27th, the market declining and closing with sales on the 31st at 235½. There was some disposition to realize early in February, the pressure influencing the market very unfavourably, forcing prices down to 220 on the 8th, the lowest point touched in the early part of the year. There was temporary recovery on the 9th, sales being effected up to 226, but closed on the same day with transactions at 220. From the 10th until the 17th the operations were small, but at decidedly stronger and steadier rates, ranging from 224½ to 229, including lots of 100 shares at 227½, selling down to 225½, and closing with sales in round amounts at 227½. The first half of March was dull and heavy, opening at 226½, dropped to 217½ on the 8th, back again to 226½ on the 18th, and was steady with considerable business at 226½ to 229½ till the close of the month. April opened brisk, sales at 231 and 227½ on the 8th, in sound amounts, was steady at 227½ to 227½, only occasional small transactions being reported under that rate until the 19th, advanced to 228, 229, 230, 231½, 232, steadily up to 235½, opening in May at 234 to 235, and 229½ to 230 ex div., fluctuating 1 to 2½ per cent., and closing at 229, which was the nominal price on the 1st of June; fell to 225½, and sold to a

fair extent up to 227½, back to 222½. July was dull beyond description at 222½ to 224½, the sales being exceedingly light during the whole month, closing at 224. There was no material change in the market until the 9th of August, when prices broke down, the disposition to buy at the decline being by no means strong, sales at 223½, touching 216½ on the 31st. September brought perhaps the most serious crisis in the history of our stock market, but it simply gave an opportunity of testing the strength of those who were large manipulators of bank shares, the price of this investment dropping to 208, with no greater effect than cleaning out a few small speculators in lots of 5 to 20 shares. The market was steadier from the 11th till the 17th at 208½ to 209½, and although a most desperate bear movement was attempted, to force the price down, it did not succeed; the turn on the 18th gained strength in spite of the means which many had in their power to weaken the value of this stock, and, contrary to the wishes of many, struggled through the pressure, and sold up again to 214, back to 212, at which September closed. The rumours current during that month, it will be remembered, had a very unfavourable influence on the stock of this bank. The President had intimated that additional capital would be required to make good the curtailment of their means by the withdrawal of Government deposits,—the then probable retirement of Mr. King in the Spring of 1873 added to the then irregular state of monetary affairs, created uneasiness which, although serious, fortunately did not last long, the market almost immediately recovering, October opening with an active demand for shares, which advanced from 213 to 239½, from the 1st to the 31st, an average business being done. The latter rate was not long maintained, November being dull, with decided downward tendency, a large business being done at 237½ and 233, closing on the 14th at 236, and opening on the 16th with sales ex div. at 228, sold back to 225½, and under an active demand touched 230½ ex div., again suddenly fell to 220½, the last few days of November being very irregular at 221½ to 224½. The determination to issue