

# The Chronicle

## Insurance & Finance.

R. WILSON SMITH,  
Proprietor.

ESTABLISHED JANUARY, 1881  
PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY

JOHN T. P. KNIGHT,  
Editor.

VOL. XX. No. 7.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1900.

SINGLE COPY - - .10  
ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION - \$2.00

### Friendly "Tips."

Among the tactics which are calculated to bring mining shares into disrepute with those who have been trying to remove gold mining from the region of speculation, and make of it an established industry for the investing public, those of the "friend" who expresses interest in your welfare, and wishes you to share in what he knows to be "a good thing" are the most reprehensible. He obtains your money by employing the methods adopted by the crafty boy who induced his little sister to part with the contents of her money-box on the promise of the first fifty cent piece found floating down the river on a grindstone. The American humorist in moralizing upon this questionable transaction says: "In all ages of the world, this eminently plausible fiction has lured the infantile mind to financial ruin and disaster."

The friendly "tips" so freely dispensed by the promoters of some recent mining flotations were merely part of the tactics employed by them when selling inferior shares at a high price and a promise of dividends.

The promoter is the crafty boy with his grindstone story, and the public, gulled by his eminently plausible fiction, play the part of the little sister waiting for the fifty cent piece which never comes down the river.

Of course, there are exceptions to every rule.

### Faulty Fire Protection.

Our citizens are justly proud of the activity and daring displayed by Montreal firemen. Their cool courage has been exhibited on many occasions, and they deserve all the praise we can bestow upon such admirable qualities in firemen. Yet they, and the general public of Montreal, may find one or two useful hints, and a valuable lesson, in the report of Mr. Tanner of the South Eastern Tariff Association, who has recently completed an investigation of the fire department and water supply of Augusta, Georgia. It is very evident that the people of Augusta have not much to brag about in their fire protection service, as Mr. Tanner says:—

"After looking over the situation here there appeared so many serious defects that it is a hard matter to know where to begin."

This is distinctly discouraging, but the many recommendations that follow this condemnation of the Augusta fire department fully expose the "serious defects." Whether this vigilant special agent of Southern fire companies would be able to find similar defects in the Montreal fire system we cannot say. His discoveries in Augusta comprised hydrants of "very ancient pattern," defective water service and great waste, and a system of appointing firemen, to describe which we must quote from Mr. Tanner's report:—

"Firemen are neither appointed nor discharged by chief. Men are elected for three years by the council. This should be changed at once and chief given entire control of his men. Chief does not even order his own equipment. Assistant chief is also foreman of hook and ladder truck. None of the companies have foreman after apparatus leaves station. Each company should have a foreman who should have charge of his company at fires, under order of chief and assistant. Present plan, or rather lack of it, leads to confusion and misdirected energy. One man less in department now than there was thirteen years ago."

In addition to the faults and weaknesses mentioned, it seems that Augusta has had no regular inspection of buildings and fire risks, possesses an "inadequate supply" of "very inferior" hose, requires two large modern engines with capacity enough to throw "effective supply of water," and also wants new hydrants. In addition to this list of requirements, Mr. Tanner suggests that the fire department be taken "entirely out of politics," and that then the chief can be held "responsible for results."

Altogether, it is quite evident that Montreal has, by comparison, a very satisfactory fire department and an excellent lot of firemen. But, if we have little else to learn from this interesting report from Georgia, there is one lesson contained therein—the dangers arising from overhead wires in the business sections of a city. Mr. Tanner asks that these wires be put underground in the central district of Augusta.

The danger referred to exists in Montreal, and property-owners and underwriters are equally interested in seeing that our brave firemen are not handicapped when fighting fires in the business section of the city by the presence of a veritable mesh of deadly electric wires. Let them be buried underground.