## THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION.

This week and next witness the assemblage in Toronto of scientists who constitute the American Association for the Advancement of Science, corresponding on this continent to the older body, the British Association, with similar aims. Officers, chiefs of sections, &c., have been here for some days. A general session of the main body is being held each day in Convocation hall, University College, while in the afternoons the sections devoted to Mathematics and Astronomy, Physics, Mechanical Science and Engineering, Authropology, Economic Science and Statistics will meet daily in rooms 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 of the building and in Convocation hall. The Chemistry Section meets in the School of Practical Science; the Geology and Geography Section in Wycliffe College; that of biology in the Biological building.

The president, Prof. Mendenhall, is director of the United States Coast Survey, and among the vice presidents are, Mr. Goodate, professor of botany at Harvard; Professor Dudley, chemist, of Nashville, Tennessee; Mr. Woodward, mathematician, Washington: Major Hill of Washington, statistician and economist, who has presented a paper on the probable future relations of the United States and Canada, and Professor Carhart, who discussed theories of electrical action. "How shall we protect our Forests?" is the important subject to be introduced by the chief of the U. S. Forestry Bureau, Prof. Fernow. Other important papers to be presented are Economic Improvement in Trade Channels, Scientific Preparation of Food, Economic and Industrial Education.

The occasion is one of great importance, as we think the local committee for the reception of these thousand visitors by this time realize. Commendable efforts have been made by the active few to receive and entertain the visitors. Let us hope that the citizens generally will aim to keep up the reputation of Toronto for a warmth of hospitable welcome which shall send the scientists and their friends away with the right sort of impression of the Queen City.

## AN ALLEGED DEFECT.

Attention is called by the London *Advertiser* to an alleged defect in the returns of Ontario loan societies as issued by the Bureau of Industries. Under the heading of "Property," it says, the debentures, money on hand, and real estate unsold are lumped. "Now, one of the best indications whether a loan society is doing a good or poor business is to be found in the record of lands thrown back on its hands. But this point cannot be brought out when the value of these lands is lumped as 'property' with all the other securities in the hands of a society." Which is very good so far as it goes. But if our contemporary will but glance at the items immediately following the heading of "Property," it will find that they constitute the detailed particulars of the "lump." For instance, the Huron and Erie Loan Co. has $219,246 in "property assets," which is seen to be made up of municipal and school securities, office furniture, cash on hand and in banks, office premises, *real estate foreclosed*, and other property, followed in each case by the amount.

The main contention of the *Advertiser* would seem to be that the returns do not indicate the value of the lands thrown back upon the hands of a company. Is this not made clear in the item of "real estate foreclosed"? It might appear less confusing were the title transferred to the foot of the column, and made to read "total property assets." Might not the item "other property," too, be altered to read "other assets," the first expression leading some to regard it as meaning real estate? In the Dominion returns a foot note explains it as debentures, etc., etc. While showing that much care has been devoted to this compilation, there are still some additions which would enhance its value as a work of ready reference. A comprehensive index is lacking, and the name of the company and not its place of business might, with advantage, be printed in alphabetical order.

## A SEVEN MONTHS' RECORD.

Messrs. Perry & Poirier, fire commissioners, of Montreal, have issued a tabulated statement which shows the fire loss in that city for the seven months ending 1st Aug., and the several classes of risks on which the losses occurred. They are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Dwellings | $11,267 |
| Stables | 3,475 |
| Saloons | 3,944 |
| Groceries | 10,354 |
| Dry good and clothiers | 14,379 |
| Wood workers | 5,070 |
| Metal workers | 11,476 |
| Crockery stores and spice mills | 642 |
| Grain elevators | 91,477 |
| Statuary and plaster works | 2,178 |
| Druggists | 9,343 |
| Sparam cement mills | 3,186 |
| Feed stores | 1,040 |
| Furniture warehouses | 315 |
| Laundries | 1,081 |
| Bakery, confectionery, and candy | 2,441 |
| Butcher shops | 1,509 |
| Jobbing and express | 648 |
| Millinery and shoe shops | 1,000 |
| Foundries | 1,115 |
| Paints, glass, and oil stores | 13,525 |
| Private boarding-house | 1,788 |
| Telephone apparatus and office | 36,200 |
| Total | $227,453 |

Of the above total loss $27,371 was not insured. It will be noticed that the losses on woodworkers are comparatively light, and that the entire loss on special risks during the period embraced in the commissioners' report is remarkably small. Has the system of schedule rating anything to do with the small number of fires on special risks? This record would have been more complete, as a statistical document, had it given the origin of the fire in the 118 investigations made. Montreal, for some time previous to 1889, was noted for its numerous and disastrous fires. We presume that the improvement in this regard is due as much to the fact that the origin of all fires is to be enquired into as to the better fire appliances now possessed by the city. We should like to see a similar tabulated statement made of all the Toronto fires. It would, we think, have a very wholesome effect on the "fire bug."

—A special general meeting of the shareholders of the Huron and Erie Loan and Savings Company was held in London on the 15th inst., when a further issue of capital stock to the extent of $1,000,000 was authorized. The company's money bank deposits have long ago reached the limit prescribed by law, and the new issue has been deemed necessary to, as the president stated, "provide for the natural growth of the company, and to satisfy British investors, who have a strong preference for companies with uncalled stock." The new capital will be issued at a premium of forty-five per cent., and will be represented by twenty thousand shares. Only one fifth of the amount will be called in at present.

## TRADE IN THE CITY.

Fall trade cannot be said to have yet fairly opened; and business remains with something of the holiday season still hanging over most lines. This quietude, however, seems likely to be short-lived, and activity may reasonably be expected within another fortnight.

In dry goods the number of country merchants in town has this week given an impetus to trade, though it has been almost entirely of a sorting up kind. Dress, hosiery, and fancy goods are selling well, but heavy staples are not in demand just now. The millinery openings have occupied the chief attention of the trade, and in consequence a large number of outside buyers have been in the city. The openings occurring at the same time both here and in Montreal, each city has been working hard to secure the trade. Importations of millinery and fancy goods are very large and have been received somewhat earlier than usual, consequently merchants made a better display, but a large quantity of stock is still expected to arrive within the next few days. The amount of trading already effected is said to be above the average, and judging from the present transactions bids fair to exceed in volume some previous years. Ribbons, feathers, and all sorts of fancy goods have been much in request and in these lines repeat orders have been cabled. Plush goods do not seem to be wanted; on the other hand velvets are selling rapidly. Ostrich feathers are being quite neglected at present, but fancy feathers of all descriptions are in general request. While prices all round are a trifle lower woollen goods remain firm and silks are unchanged. It is satisfactory to record some improvement in payments lately. Large sums fall due on the fourth of next month, and anxiety evidently exists in some quarters as to how they will be met. Generally, however, the tone is hopeful, and the moving of the new crop is looked forward to as certain to inaugurate a period of more financial ease.

Crop reports continue generally satisfactory, the most serious complaint being that concerning a general discoloration of barley. Stocks of old grain have begun to be moved off, resulting in a considerable decrease of stocks, which stood on Monday morning as follows:—Flour, 1,115 brls.; fall wheat, 6,254 bush.; spring wheat, 69,427 bush.; oats, 12,855 bush.; barley 144,465 bush.; and peas, 600 bushels. A further decrease of the barley stock is, we understand, in progress. Prices of grain at outside markets have varied during the week; cable quotations show a decline on both wheat and corn in English markets, and this whilst August weather is said to have damaged English crops. In the