

and could be had at any decent drug store in any city, for forty or fifty cents compounded, and that therefore an exaction of 437½ per cent. excessive profit had been made by the hungry apothecary. The result is a Division Court suit for the amount of the said usurious profit, which the self-satisfied dealer describes as "a slight extra assessment!"

AFTER a twelve years sleep, with occasional interruptions, the Great Southern, or Niagara and Detroit River Railway project seems to be awakening into vigorous life. The Erie line, and the Michigan Southern seem to want it, and the Chicago and Northwestern likewise. The new "Air Line" is to be shorter by 13 miles than the Great Western, will be as nearly as possible a direct line through the level country, from Amherstburg to St. Thomas, and thence in nearly an air line to Fort Erie. Its length (it has been often enough surveyed since 1856) is 216 miles, and as its greatest altitude over mean level is 42 feet, it will have 80 feet less climbing to do than the Great Western, which with the absence of curves, makes it and its connections a shorter route by 70 miles than any other road from the Atlantic to the Mississippi: so say its advocates. The County of Elgin has voted \$200,000, unconditional subsidy; Kent, \$80,000, also unconditional; Essex, votes \$200,000 with a proviso that there shall be a line, whether branch or main, to Amherstburg, one half the sum to be paid when the line is graded and ready for the rails, the other when the line is ready for traffic, which "shall be," says the by-law, no later than 1st December, 1872.

THE FLATS CANAL—WESTERN LAKE TRAFFIC—THE BOUNDARY LINE, &c.

(From an Occasional Correspondent.)

DETROIT, July 29, 1870.

The position of this city of the Straits may be described as closely resembling that of Constantinople, with Lake Erie, Lake St. Clair and Lake Huron to represent the Mediterranean: the Marmora and the Black Sea: the stately flowing Detroit River for our occidental Dardanelles. If it were wished to carry the comparison further, the lovely islands, vine-planted, clustered in the river mouth and in the western end of Erie, are in close analogy to the classic Archipelago.

Seated on these wharves, however, one has little time to be imaginative; the roar and the rush of street and water traffic deafen you to old-world sounds, and compel your alert attention to the story of to-day. Within twenty years, and still more notably within ten, Detroit has made remarkable progress. Lake Superior copper, Michigan timber, and Saginaw salt have multiplied her commerce and extended her boundaries since 1860, in a way that shames any of our Canadian frontier places. She was fitly named, in Mr. Howe's great speech at the Commercial Convention of 1865, "The gateway of a nation's commerce."

Taking advantage of an excursion on a steamer to the Flats Canal, Lake St. Clair, we visited the spot which is just now a bone of contention between us and Uncle Sam. The following is the way in which the eyes of the American Eagle were opened to the true position of the canal with respect to the boundary: The contractor had need of some fuel for his dredge, and bought the same from a Canadian, who unloaded his Canadian scow of Canadian wood at the work. The 'cute U. S. authorities at Detroit immediately

seized the wood-scow for unloading Canada fuel on American soil. But the master of the scow protested that he was in Canadian waters, and they let him off on his own recognizances. Meantime, the respective Governments are collecting evidence as to the correctness of his plea.

Twenty-five miles upward from Detroit we reach "the Flats," a broad expanse of reedy shallows, where the River St. Clair debouches into the lake, its several channels forming a delta of deeper water. To use the language of the charts—"To enter the river by the South Pass from the lighthouse at the head of Detroit River, steer N.E. ¼ N. for twenty miles, till you make the pile-work on the Bar. When in fifteen feet, bring the pile-work to bear E., and keep at this course until abreast of the piles. Then bear up N.E., and keep this course till the lead shows you are in the river channel. The channel banks from this point are marked by piles on each side, and are distinctly visible by the color of the water in ordinary weather." From three-fourths to one, and a quarter mile eastward of the channel here described, is the canal which the American Government, at the cost of half a million dollars, have cut to straighten the course and deepen the water on this troublesome strait. And certainly, if the boundary between the two countries remains where all charts and maps for the past hundred years have placed it—viz., in the centre of this south channel—then the canal is wholly in Canadian waters. Not that we quarrel with it at all, or have the slightest objection to "the most enlightened Government the world has yet seen" improving our property at its proper expense. It is hardly likely that we shall charge their vessels any more toll through it than our own, but put it upon the same liberal footing in this respect as the Welland and our other canals.

The official who planned the work is said to have located it according to a map of a by-gone day which he discovered somewhere in the archives at Washington, and which shows that the whole canal, with the exception of a few rods at the south end, is in American water. Against this, however, we have the testimony of every late map and chart, sanctioned and confirmed by usage, and that of old and experienced tug-men and mariners, such as Captain Hackett, of Bois Blanc light, familiar with these lakes since 1817, whose affidavit was taken in the presence of your correspondent by a Canadian commissioner, to show that the work along its whole length is beyond question through Canadian water.

With a delicate courtesy worthy of a great nation, they have permitted a Canadian contractor, Mr. John Brown, of Thorold, to do the work, and from him we obtained the information that the cutting is 10,000 feet in length, and its direction nearly parallel with the direction of the boundary at this point, say N.N.E. and S.S.W. It is 300 feet wide, and will be dredged to a depth of 15 feet. There are between 7,000 and 8,000 feet of crib work on either side, and on each side of this will be placed a range light, the foundations of which are now being laid in cut stone, surrounded with crib work. Mr. Brown has at present employed on the work, six dredges, five pile-drivers, two tugs, and 180 men. He began the work in the spring of 1878, and is to complete it by October, 1879. The cost thus far is under \$430,000; the lighthouses are contracted for at \$40,000 additional, and the total cost, he thinks, will not exceed \$500,000.

The saving effected by this straight cut will be very great, as the difficulty of navigating the old channel has been yearly increasing with the growth in number and size of the craft employed in the lake traffic. Collisions and destruction of spars and rigging; grounding, swinging broadside across the channel, and causing a jam; lightering, and consequent detention, were the almost daily, or nightly, experience in this crowded and shallow channel.

The carrying trade of these western lakes is something enormous. In the absence of printed

statistics, it will, perhaps, give your readers a good idea of its extent to learn that the writer saw thirteen propellers, carrying each from 450 to 1,200 tons, pass Amherstburg from sunrise to sunset of one day this week. The largest of these, bound downward, carried 82,000 bushels of oats and 1,000 barrels of pork. Twenty-nine barques and schooners were towed past the same point in the same time—all sailing vessels are taken from Lake Huron to Erie, or vice versa, by tugs, now-a-days—grain-laden downward, coal and merchandise upward, not to mention the fleet of barges bringing the Michigan pine to Toledo and Buffalo for transshipment East. Out of these, but one propeller and four vessels were Canadian, probably bound from Chicago to Kingston or Montreal.

Navigators do not deem Mr. W. A. Thompson at all chimerical when he says there is room and need for another railway line through Canada to carry the freight eastward, while the people of Essex and Elgin, hoping since the days of Zimmerman and Isaac Buchanan for a "Southern Railroad," are more hopeful now than ever of its completion.

Insurance.

FIRE RECORD.—Whitevale, July 21.—A building belonging to T. P. White, and occupied by S. B. Wigmore as a tin-shop, was entirely consumed, with most of the contents.

Brantford, August 4.—A fire broke out in a tin-shop of T. Cowherd, Jr., communicating immediately to Mr. Hamilton's grocery store. The fire was soon extinguished. The losses are:—T. Cowherd, Jr., D. Hamilton; J. T. Toggerson, saddler-shop; B. F. Fitch, law office. Loss and insurance not yet known.

Peterboro', August 4.—A fire broke out in Taylor's Pump factory and Furniture shop, Simcoe street, by which the building and contents and the adjoining two-story double dwelling and a dwelling and stable of Mr. A. Dobbins, were consumed. Mr. Taylor is insured in the Hartford for \$800; Mr. Dobbin \$1,000, in the Commercial Union and some other company. The contents of Mr. Dobbins' building and the dwelling were saved. The fire is thought to have been work of an incendiary. It is reported a man was seen coming out of the Pump factory a few minutes before the fire broke out.

Toronto, Aug. 6.—A fire was discovered in some frame cottages, situated on the corner of River and Queen streets, and owned by Robert Defries. The engines were promptly on the spot, but all the exertions of the firemen could not prevent the whole range, which consisted of five five dwellings, being utterly destroyed. The persons inhabiting the houses managed to save the greater portion of their goods, but much damage was occasioned to the latter by water. Mr. Defries is insured in the Royal, for \$800, but the total value of the property burned is estimated at \$1,200.

Caledonia Springs, Aug. 7.—This morning, about a quarter past five o'clock, the engine house belonging to the Canada House caught fire. All possible means were contrived to save the hotel, but they were of no avail, and soon after the house was burned to the ground. No lives were lost. The property was well insured.

FOUR PER CENT.—A low rate of interest necessitates more ample reserves and greater circumspection in the management of a new life company. "As the twig is bent the tree's inclined." The early experience of a life institution, like the training of boyhood, impresses itself upon its entire future. The habits acquired early, in that impressive period, never leave it in maturity. "The child is father of the man." A company economical at the outset will continue to save, but if on the strength of a high rate of interest it acquires habits of extravagance, it will remain a spendthrift, and entail ruin and disappointment upon its policy-holders.