

UNITED STATES FIRE BUSINESS.

Touching this, in which so many British offices are interested, the returns for the first six months of 1894 show a considerable improvement upon the corresponding period of 1893, but no improvement as against the corresponding period of 1892. As 1892 was a very different year for British companies in the United States—in fact all around it was a very lean year—it is clear that the worst has not yet been seen of business in the Eastern States, and the outlook is anything but encouraging. To the few offices who avoid touching the business, it is a puzzle why the British offices remain in it, as, taking an average of years, no money is made. Sometimes a big haul is made, and the offices are jubilant until the following year, when the fire fiend awakes and devours the profits. The step taken by the Guardian to retire from the field was a bold, as well as a wise one, and all kinds of excuses have been framed on the part of our American contemporaries to account for the withdrawal, the principal one being that of niggardliness; but such an excuse will not for a moment hold good, as it is well known that the Guardian is not an office that a charge of niggardliness can be levied against. Mr. Relton is not the man to throw away a quarter of a million of premiums if even the very moderate surplus of 4 per cent. on the trading account could have been secured. The step was a wise one, and we may venture to predict that it is one that will be followed by other British offices in the near future. Rumors are current about several companies, and there is never smoke without fire.

The following are the returns for the six months ending 30th June, 1894, of the operations of the British fire insurance in the United States, referred to above:

	Income.	Expenditure.
Caledonian	\$1,520,617	\$1,017,172
Commercial Union	1,459,746	1,432,107
Guardian	734,938	1,066,691
Imperial	575,097	594,750
Lancashire	986,317	997,328
Lion	289,911	285,635
Liverpool, London and Globe	2,928,615	2,612,550
London	633,655	576,260
London and Lancashire.	946,072	940,387
North British and Mer- cantile	1,208,502	1,254,836
Northern	656,949	661,763
Norwich Union	818,891	794,318
Palatine	1,032,290	1,042,015
Royal	2,416,964	2,283,719
Scottish Union and Na- tional	724,459	602,496
Sun	741,000	867,724

—Irish Investors' Guardian.

—Up to date, says the Winnipeg Free Press of 3rd inst., the receipts of wheat at the Fort William elevators from Manitoba have been 5,500,000 bushels, which is about the same amount that was received to December 1st last year, showing a full month's business in advance of 1893. The activity still continues, and it is believed will extend into the new year.

STOCKS IN MONTREAL.

MONTREAL, 7th Nov., 1894.

Stocks.	Highest.	Lowest.	Total.	Sellers.	Buyers.	Average price 1893.
Montreal	226	225	29	227	225	221
Ontario	110	110	15	112	109	109
People's				126	123	112
Molson's	166	166	6	170	165	152
Toronto				260	251	235
Jac. Cartier	118	118	116	122	117	120
Merchants	168	168	16	168	167	152
Commerce	140	139	289	140	139	138
Union	103	103	7	103	103	103
M. Teleg	152	152	147	152	152	141
Rich. & Ont	86	86	75	86	85	61
Street Ry	159	158	1100	159	159	172
do new stock	157	156	880	157	157	157
Gas	189	184	6687	189	188	180
C. Pacific Ry	63	62	1085	63	62	73
Land gr't bnds				109	109	109
N. West Land	45	45	50	69		
Bell Tele. Co.	155	155	53	155	154	138
do, new stock						
Montreal 4%						

Commercial.

MONTREAL MARKETS.

MONTREAL, Nov. 7th, 1894.

ASHES.—Owing to a light export demand there has been a slackening in the value of pots, which are now quoted at \$4.30 to \$4.35; seconds can hardly be quoted at more than \$3.80. Pearls show better value, being quoted at 40 shillings in London, and 42 shillings in Liverpool, which would warrant a local quotation of \$6.75 to 7.00 per cental.

CEMENTS AND FIREBRICKS.—There are some very fair lots of cements going forward on orders booked previously, and the indications are that stocks carried over will be light. We quote: English, \$1.95 to 2.05. Firebricks are in light demand, but stocks are small and prices firm at \$17.00 to 22.00 per M.

DAIRY PRODUCTS.—Last week showed a material improvement in cheese shipments, 72,770 boxes having been taken by outgoing steamers, making the aggregate to date 1,512,329 boxes, which is nearly 40,000 ahead of last year at date. We quote fine Western, 10c.; Townships, 10 to 10c.; Eastern, 9c. to 9c. per lb. The export trade in butter this season has been a mere bagatelle, shipments of only 30,876 being reported. A fair local business is being done in late made creamery, but other grades are dull. We quote creamery 18c. to 20c.; Townships' dairy, 18 to 19c.; Western, 16 to 18c. Good boiling eggs bring 15 to 17c.; packed, 13 to 14c. per dozen.

DRY GOODS.—We do not learn of anything especially interesting in recent English advices,

except that there has been recently a rather better demand for goods. Woolen goods are firm, and there is a supposition that there may be some advance in goods for next fall trade. American cottons, which were advanced upon the settlement of the tariff question, are back to old prices. In domestic fabrics enquiry develops nothing new. There are indications of colder weather, which is badly needed to help along retail trade, which has been very slack in both city and country, and assorting business has been small of late in our warehouses.

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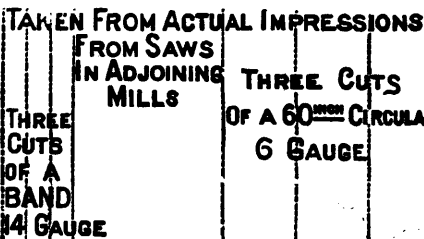
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