

Prominent Topics.

Luncheon to English Visitors.

A luncheon was given on Wednesday at the St. James Club, Montreal, by Mr. R. Wilson-Smith to Sir Reginald MacLeod of MacLeod, Mr. Charles A. Hanson and Mr. James H. Scott, of London. There were also present the Hon. Alphonse Desjardins, Mr. S. H. Ewing, Mr. William Hanson, Mr. J. Haydn Horsey, Mr. B. Hal Brown and Mr. Edwin Hanson. Sir Reginald MacLeod spent a few days in Ottawa and intends with the Duke of Sutherland's party to visit the West and British Columbia, where these gentlemen will have large interests. Sir Reginald is a director of the Gresham Life Assurance Company. Mr. Charles Hanson is chairman of the Gresham Life and Sheriff of London and in due course will become Lord Mayor of London. Mr. James H. Scott is general manager of the Gresham Life, which is about to establish a branch office in Canada.

New Grain Elevator.

The new grain elevator being constructed by the Montreal Harbour Commission is to have its capacity increased from 1,772,000 bushels to 2,620,000 bushels. It is hoped to have the elevator completed in time to handle the crop of 1912. It will be able to handle 40,000 bushels an hour inwards and at the same time 60,000 bushels an hour outwards. It will serve steamers at the wharf and cars on the rails simultaneously.

France Ready for Defence.

In these days of war and rumours of war it is gratifying to learn upon high authority that France is in a good condition for defensive purposes. This in itself may tend to avert war. M. Paul Doumer, who is likely to be the next president of France, says: "We have spent hundreds of millions since 1905 on the eastern forts, which today form a line of defence not to be found elsewhere in Europe. The artillery has been doubled and the war materials tripled since then. It is because that this is known that we can be confident of peace being maintained. Our army is ready and it can regard the darkening horizon without uneasiness and say to everybody, 'Come when you will.'"

Civic Salary Increases.

The City Council of Montreal has adopted a report of the Board of Control recommending increases of salaries aggregating \$17,000. That some of the increases are well deserved we feel sure and we feel equally convinced that some of them are not so well deserved. This is a matter with regard to which, subject to obviously necessary limitations, the heads of departments should have entire control. Civic employes should be trained, like most other employes, to look to their immediately superior officers for advancement, rather

than to the favour of aldermen or controllers, who in the nature of things cannot know very much about their individual efficiency.

Lamentable Marine Disaster.

By the foundering of the French steamer "Emir" five miles east of Tarifa, Spain, in the Straits of Gibraltar ninety-three persons were drowned, sixty-nine passengers and twenty-four of the crew. Twelve of the crew and fifteen passengers were saved. Most of the passengers embarked at Oran, Algeria, for Tangier, Morocco. The disaster was caused by collision in a dense fog with the British steamer Silverton, from Newport, England, bound for Taranto, Italy.

Strike in England.

The strike among the railway men and carters in England is increasing in extent and seriousness. About 65,000 men are now out on strike, the food supply of London and other great centres is menaced; ice, fish and other perishable freight are being ruined, stocks of flour and other provisions are being threatened with destruction, vessels are tied up, and acts of violence are of frequent occurrence. As a result of the strike of the 65,000 men, about 125,000 are idle, and the military have now been ordered out. When an English mob loses its head it loses it very completely, and it is safe to assume that the strike will cost the workmen and their families a great deal more than they will ever get out of it. Meanwhile the hindrance to general business must be very great.

St. Lawrence Street Extension.

It is to be hoped rather than expected, that the Legislature will refuse to ratify the report of the Montreal Board of Control, which has been adopted by the City Council authorising the extension of St. Lawrence Main Street to the river. The extension is not needed unless Montreal wants what Alderman Carter aptly calls "another Bowery." No considerable traffic will or can use the street, the traffic from the harbour being too heavy and the street too steep and crowded for heavy loads. It is in the interest of nobody but the vendors, but it is a good deal in their interests. The option prices are as follows:—

The Congregation Sisters.....	\$617,350
Estate Masson.....	34,326
Dame Thos. Darling.....	7,749
Estate Cornelle.....	48,380
Estate Tiffin.....	34,788
J. H. Joseph.....	25,000

Total.....\$767,593

The assessed valuations are as follows:—

Congregation Sisters.....	\$329,550
Estate Masson.....	21,150
Dame Thos. Darling.....	6,850
McArthur, Cornelle & Co.....	38,000
Estate Tiffin.....	22,500
H. & H. Joseph.....	13,500

Total.....\$437,550

A comparison of the two tables suggests that there is something wrong somewhere. The city should not value real estate for purchase at nearly double the price it assesses for taxation.