

already beginning to be on Wednesday afternoon. Prompt measures vigorously pushed would save citizens from serious losses caused by flooded basements and cellars. Claims for damages will far exceed the cost of clearing the gutters, unless that urgently needed work is done right away.

* * * *

To-day is the monthly settling day for the principal retail trades, whose bills given to wholesale merchants fall due on the 4th of the month. Owing to the unprecedented obstruction to traffic by snow blockades in railways and country roads there has been such a falling off in the receipts of storekeepers, and farmers whose grain and produce could not be marketed, that a larger amount of renewals will be called for than usual. The large dry-goods houses do not appear to apprehend any trouble worse than delay in the engagements of their customers being met as business is regarded as only held back until traffic begins to move freely. Even in this city of Toronto, where the street railway keeps passenger traffic moving, the retailers have suffered from a serious decrease of sales owing to the severe weather. A thaw will set trade running as freely in its usual channels as well as streams from melting snow.

* * *

The latest report as to the supply of money in the Bank of Russia does not indicate such an impecunious condition as has been reported. The return stood as follows, compared with same date a year ago:—

ASSETS.	1904.	1903.	Increase.
	\$	\$	\$
Gold.....	371,070,000	307,150,000	63,920,000
Balances abroad.....	86,870,000	28,860,000	58,010,000
Silver and other coins.	40,050,000	37,715,000	2,335,000
Securities and short loans.....	164,660,000	162,865,000	1,795,000
Other securities owned.	26,850,000	22,135,000	4,715,000
Loans and advances...	65,880,000	65,285,000	595,000
Due by branches, etc.	47,335,000	95,235,000	Dec. 47,900,000
Total assets.....	\$802,715,000	\$719,245,000	Inc. \$83,470,000

In the same period the circulation increased from \$283,110,000 to \$294,765,000, and the deposits declined from \$289,305,000 to \$241,680,000. The increase of cash has been going on while enormous expenditures were being incurred in preparing for the war now raging with Japan.

* * * *

The terms of the proposed changes in the charter of this city show a disposition on the part of Aldermen to be good to themselves. Whether the city as such, and citizens at large will be benefitted is quite another question. To make the alderman's term of office four years instead of two suggests whether, in some circles, it would not be an acceptable change to elect aldermen for life, like Senators. One year is too short a time for members of a City Council to serve, as so long a period is spent in acquiring a

knowledge of the city's affairs and the methods of conducting civic business. But the four years' term deprives the citizens of the opportunity of removing inefficient and otherwise objectionable aldermen for far too long a period.

* * * *

The "blanket" charter proposed has features in it that menace the welfare and the credit of the city. It would put Montreal back to the days before the charter was so amended as to place a restraint upon maladministration and wastefulness. Our citizens need beware of what is contemplated by the proposed changes in the city charter.

FIRE AT CANADIAN COPPER CO., COPPER CLIFF, ONT.

By the fire which occurred on the 19th ult. the following companies are interested:—

North British and Mercantile..	\$23,000
Norwich Union..	10,000
Home..	6,500
Northern ..	6,250
Western..	5,800
British America..	5,000
Queen..	5,000
Royal ..	5,000
Atlas..	4,300
Liverpool & London & Globe..	4,250
Anglo-American..	4,000
Scottish Union and National ..	4,000
Sun ..	3,750
Mercantile ..	3,000
Aetna ..	2,500
Caledonian ..	2,500
Equity ..	2,500
Ins. Co. of North America ..	2,500
National ..	2,500
Union ..	2,500
Phenix, of Brooklyn ..	2,500
Traders' ..	2,000
Law Union and Crown ..	1,700
Standard ..	1,500
Merchants'..	1,000
	\$113,550

Estimated loss, 90 per cent.

FIRE AT MENZIE MANUFACTURING CO., TORONTO.

By the fire which occurred on the 24th ult. the following companies are interested. This makes the third fire in three years for above company:—

Alliance..	\$14,000
Royal ..	13,500
Atlas ..	8,000
London and Lancashire ..	6,000
Queen ..	7,500
Home..	5,000
National..	3,500
North British and Mercantile ..	3,500
Norwich Union ..	3,000
Northern ..	2,000