

A Warning to Montreal. It is quite sufficient to have the work of plucky firemen retarded by the network of wires now lining many of the principal streets of Montreal without adding to this obstacle by permitting the streets to get into such a state that the fire engines and their drivers are now endangered by the many holes they encounter when responding to an alarm. The proper view to take of this serious question is embodied in a telegram from New Orleans to New York on the 24th inst., in which it is stated that certain portions of the business district of New Orleans are without protection from fire. The streets are impassable by reason of the desultory drainage and conduit work now being done. Great ditches block the street crossings in many places and huge piles of stone debris blockade some of the principal streets. Millions of dollars worth of property are in jeopardy of destruction by fire. The report adds that fire once started in this blockaded section of New Orleans, it would be almost impossible to prevent a conflagration. As the threatened locality was only recently re-rated and considerable reductions made in insurance rates, the companies concerned will probably arouse the citizens to action in the matter.

The Streets of Montreal. In New Orleans, also, the citizens have been showing contempt for their civic rulers, by sticking up boards in all the most neglected localities, bearing jeering and sarcastic allusions to the miserable incapacity of those in authority over them. Some of the more sanguinary sufferers by the neglected condition of the streets have labelled lamp-posts with the names of the road committeemen, a significant hint at the fate awaiting them if the streets are not shortly cleaned.

Indignation in Montreal at the same state of affairs as that existing in the South is likely to find expression at a public meeting, and, although an outbreak of abuse or violence is not likely to occur in a peaceful Canadian city, it will not be surprising if those to whom the care of our streets is committed will be asked to retire from the positions they now disgrace. Can it be possible that the Road Committee have no sense of sight or smell? Are the holes in St. James Street and other of the main thoroughfares of the metropolis not visible to them? Are the pestiferous smells arising from the filthy side streets as the odour of dainty and sweet spring violets to these sleepy and useless guardians of the public health? The subject is a sickening one to deal with, and the more exasperating because of the fact that such neglect is costing Montreal more thousands of dollars' damage from undesirable advertising of the city's shame than proper attention to the filthy streets could possibly cost.

As the loud rapping at the door of the civic Rip Van Winkles meets with no response, let the threatened public meeting be held without delay. Health and

cleanliness, the good name and reputation of the metropolis, demand our instant and united action in this important matter.

Copper. In discussing the phenomenal advance in the price of copper, some of the British financial papers have incidentally drawn attention to the increased demand for manufactured and refined copper. It is not surprising to learn that to the increasing demands of electricity is attributed much of the immense business doing in this valuable metal. But, in connection with the question whether the demand will keep pace with the supply, it will surprise many to learn that, of the world's output of copper for last year, 424,000 tons, over one half, was supplied by the United States. In 1872 the United States production was only 12,500 tons, whereas in 1898 it amounted to 234,000 tons.

Such an enormous increase will give one same idea of the resources possessed by our neighbours, and must, as a matter of course, serve to draw attention to the splendid mineral beds of the Dominion of Canada. Some of the dividends declared by the leading copper mines are almost too good to publish. Thus we find the Calumet and Hecla with a capital of \$2,500,000 has returned to its happy shareholders no less a sum than \$60,000,000.

That copper should be selected as the basis for a combine of the most colossal proportions is not surprising. The attention being devoted to copper mines has been the feature of the London Stock Exchange for some time past, and the "Daily Telegraph" of that city recently published an exhaustive article dealing with the prospects of this now precious metal. In referring to the enhanced demand for copper for ships, guns and electrical purposes, the "Telegraph" says: "It is quite possible, and even probable, that we shall see still higher prices maintained for some time to come, but the higher the quotation the more surely and the more quickly it will bring its own reaction."

In 1870 the world's production amounted to 82,720 tons, and the price was \$380 per ton. In 1895, with an estimated production of from 200,000 to 220,000 tons, the price had fallen to \$215. Now, with a production which is calculated to have reached 424,000 tons in 1898, we find copper again approaching the 1870 mark, the present price being over \$350 per ton.

Of the Anaconda, one of the properties mentioned as included in the rumoured combine, the "Telegraph" says that the mine has in the last three years paid \$9,000,000 in dividends.

The "Telegraph" adds that it is essential that subscribers to new copper companies should assure themselves, not only that they possess a mine which will pay at the present quotation of the metal, but that they have got one which can make a profit when the inevitable reaction brings copper down to possibly less than half its current price.