

a few dollars to invest, who are often made the butt of similar schemes. The witnesses will all be under oath, so that it is probable we shall hear facts rather than big talk about the acorn and the oak. The "acorn" of the advertisement is supposed to represent the assets in April, 1894, of a company in the United States with "plans" similar to those of Mr. Ostrom; and the "oak," to represent these assets ten years later. History—or at least the advertising sheet in question—does not enlighten us as to how many times the copyright plans were disposed of in this case. Perhaps there was only one acorn. But we believe Canadian investors as a rule will be quite content to leave acorns alone, although these may become oak trees, and put their money instead in some mere bramble with a good-sized root on it.

OUR SAINT JOHN LETTER.

Merchants all over New Brunswick report the best Christmas business in years. No doubt the exceptionally fine weather that has prevailed all month contributed largely to this. The week preceding Christmas had only one unpleasant day and even that was not so disagreeable as to interfere with shopping. Every line of trade reports sales ahead of last year and some of the leading houses declare the business done, and the character of the purchases made indicated that the people are better supplied with money and more ready to spend it than ever before.

The trouble referred to in my last letter between the Allan Line and the Longshoremen's Association culminated in the organization of a new ship laborers' society with about a hundred members, most of them former members of the old society. This new organization is now loading the steamers of the Allan Line, while the parent body is handling the other lines running to this port. The split was an outcome of the recent strike.

That business is booming in the Canadian winter port may be gathered from some figures made public on Saturday by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. These showed that so far this season upwards of 1,600 more cars of freight have arrived here for export than to the same period last year. The indications, the railway company say, are that all previous records will be broken, both in the volume of export and import business. The city of St. John is this year imposing a small tax on this business, which it is hoped will yield sufficient to pay interest on the expenditure that has been made in providing wharves, etc.

The Canadian Pacific Railway Company has announced that during the coming year a very large sum of money will be spent in extraordinary work on the lines in this division. New steel bridges are to be built, heavier rails laid on the branches, round houses to be enlarged, passing tracks extended, new warehouses built at McAdam and other points, snow fences erected and other work done. The expenditure will be a large one and will materially improve the line in New Brunswick and Maine.

The Treasury Board of St. John has agreed to recommend to the City Council a vote of \$400 to be spent in securing the opinion of an expert on the best means of harnessing the reversing falls here so as to convert their power to practical use. Since the matter was mooted there has been quite a discussion about these reversible falls and the tides. There are those who think the high tides prevailing here put at the service of the city a power much greater than the falls and that it would be money well spent to see how this power could be utilized. One suggestion is that the city offer a purse of, say \$10,000, for the best practical solution of the problem. This, it is believed would induce some of the world's greatest scientists to grapple with the interesting subject. Even harnessing the falls is a problem of some magnitude, for the tide there turns every six hours and the strength of the current varies with every minute.

Local engineers do not think an expenditure of so little as \$400 will land the city anywhere at all.

Messrs. Robertson, Trites & Co., Limited, a local dry goods firm whose difficulties were recently referred to, have been unable to secure additional capital, and are to be wound up, one of the company, F. G. Trites, having made application for an order which will be argued this week. Another provincial company that is in difficulties is the J. W. Dumas Company, of Grand Anse and Shippigan, carrying on a large general trade. They owe considerable money to J. W. Dumas and he is asking to have the business wound up.

Announcement was made to-day that Fred. H. Tippet, a local brokerage agent, had suspended payment. His liabilities will not be heavy.

Mr. David Russell, of Montreal, who is the owner of the St. John "Telegraph" and "Times," was most generous this Christmas, presenting every St. John newsboy, irrespective of the paper he sold, with a new suit of clothes and a new reefer, all were made to order. This is only one of many generous acts of Mr. Russell to the poor of St. John. A couple of years ago he sent here 1,000 barrels of flour for distribution, and he is always a generous giver to local charities.

St. John, N.B., 26th Dec., 1905.

BOWMANVILLE.

A remarkably creditable issue is the edition of the "Canadian Statesman," of Bowmanville, for 13th December. It consists of twenty pages, eight of them on fine paper profusely illustrated. The motto of the "Statesman" is—and the paper has nearly reached its fifty-second volume—"Our Town and County first; the World afterwards," and we commend to other country journals this order of procedure. Much that is of interest is to be learned from these pages. They do not show, they cannot show, the landscape beauty of the County of Durham; but they illustrate what creditable features Bowmanville possesses in its churches and schools, its handsome residences, and further, the manufacturing establishments which the enterprise of its people have planted there in recent years. The Bowmanville Organ and Piano Company has made itself known in many quarters of the world for the excellence of its products, and possesses diplomas from various exhibitions, including London, Paris, and Antwerp. The Durham Rubber Company is another of the town's industries; besides which are the Foundry Co., the Evaporator Works, the Stott & Jury Drug Co. The history of Bowmanville, by J. B. Fairbairn, P.M., in which the author speaks familiarly of sixty years ago, causes the editor of the Monetary Times to look up the family Bible to see where the years have gone. Messrs. James & Son are entitled to congratulation on the admirable tone of the "Statesman," maintained for so many years.

COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS.

The Dominion Commercial Travellers' Association held their annual meeting in Montreal on the 16th inst., and elected Mr. F. L. Cains, president; Messrs. J. S. Thompson, W. J. Cleghorn, E. S. Bois, J. B. Giles, and Arthur Terroux, directors. An animated discussion arose during the meeting as to the manner in which the ballot papers were distributed and this will be investigated later.

The North-West Commercial Travellers' Association held their annual meeting in Winnipeg on Saturday evening last, and a resolution was passed instructing the new Executive to continue the fight for repeal of the British Columbia and Quebec legislation imposing a tax on travellers. They also decided to erect an association building having sample and club rooms. They now have available assets totalling over \$97,000, and 1,843 members.