

## THE VALUE OF INSURANCE TO THE BUSINESS WORLD.

That the insurance of property from loss by fire or from the casualties of the sea is one of the chief factors in shaping and conserving commerce throughout the world is a recognized fact among men who observe and think. Like the indispensable every day gifts of nature, however, the very commonness of insurance tends to obscure our view as to its importance. It is only when the exceptional happens like the great Chicago fire, or lesser conflagrations like St. John's, Boston and Milwaukee, that men open their eyes to the commercial value of insurance. Then they see that a hundred or a thousand or ten thousand business men are saved by insurance capital from utter ruin, which in its turn would mean ruin wholly or in part to as many more who are connecting links in the great commercial chain. Insurance capital replaces the broken links, and the machinery of business goes on. A second Chicago or St. John's, better than the first, rises upon the ashes, and we do not need to alter our maps. A big ship and its cargo is swallowed up by the sea, but another speedily takes its place, thanks to insurance capital. Insurance to-day is the basis of credit, without which business would stagnate at the centres and be paralyzed at the circumference of our commercial system; it promotes manufactures, encourages art, protects the home, and is a potent factor in all material development, scarcely second in importance to our monetary system.

The independence of the individual exists only in Utopia, and necessarily gives place in practice to that interdependence which is a universal condition of society. Insurance stands as the exponent of this interdependence, for in its essential features it is an equalizer of the loss burdens of the community. It is a collecting and distributing agency by which each contributor is protected from severe loss through the systematic contribution of all. In order to wield this agency with safety and equity, careful training and wide experience are necessary. Insurance requires not only a thorough knowledge of the principles to be applied, but a knowledge of the actual hazard belonging to various kinds of property, in order that premium contribution may be fitted equitably to the promised indemnity. This involves system and permanence, such an organization, backed by guarantee capital, alone can secure. The experience of a single year in a given locality is conclusive of nothing as to premium rate or loss probability. Neither is the experience of a single year over a wide field sufficient for equitable and safe treatment of the problem of loss, hence the gathered experience of many years and over an extended field must be made the basis of all real insurance, which makes certain indemnity possible because it founds its transactions on the law of average. A loss in one locality swallowing up all the premiums received therefrom in twenty or fifty or a hundred years is offset by other localities where the premiums are in excess of the loss.

It is passing strange that now and then business men are found who try to ignore

the commercial value of insurance as a system almost universal, and who seem entirely ignorant of the fundamental principles which have made the system what it is. Every now and then the citizens of a town bring forward some scheme for local insurance by the civic authorities, and propose to declare their independence of the insurance companies and the rest of the world, oblivious of the fact that a man cannot swallow his own head, and that is quite as easy as for Fredericton, N. B., for instance, whose self-insurance scheme we deal with elsewhere, to make its own property pay for itself after it is burned up. A given town may escape any great fire loss for a dozen years, as St. John's did, but the next day or the next week after adopting self-insurance it may face a conflagration.

It ought to be sufficient for any business man to remember what a record for loss paying insurance has made when the greatest fires have occurred, and that experience has shown that its great ability has been and is because it covers a continent and gathers from the many the means to indemnify the few.—*Insurance Chronicle*.

## BRITAIN'S TRADE WITH CANADA. 1892.

According to the statement compiled by the British Board of Trade, the commerce between Canada and Great Britain in 1892 was eminently satisfactory. Our imports from the motherland totalled £4,875,352 against £4,877,246 in 1891, being a decrease of £1,894, or only 0.3 per cent. Of horses we imported £33,725 against £82,619, showing quite a falling off. A decrease also took place, amounting to £4,209 in our imports of salt, and an increase of £8,515 is found in spirits. Wool decreased £3,412, while we imported more cotton goods to the excess value of £33,012, of jute to the value of £7,329, and of linen to the increased value of £31,520.

Our imports of worsted and woollen goods increased respectively £50,371 and £48,461 for the year, while our imports of carpets declined £5,200, and of cutlery and hardware £1,653. With regard to the iron trade, the only increase was in unwrought tin, imports of which were £5,370 more than in 1891, while the chief contraction was that of £31,051 in tin plates. There was an increase of \$33,524 in our imports of machinery, indicating that our manufacturing industries are going ahead.

Our exports to Great Britain are in the usual articles and show very satisfactorily, on the whole. The total for the year reached £10,798,720, an increase of £1,357,400, or 14.86 per cent. Our cattle trade, however, did not share in the general prosperity, the shipments of oxen and bulls showing a decrease of £171,833, cows £21,818, and sheep and lambs £31,388. Our wheat exports were £1,443,938, an increase of £11,511, and our exports of flour were £701,913, an increase of £83,319. This is most satisfactory as indicating the growing favor in which our millers are held. Butter and cheese exports were respectively £68,360 and £502,028. A decrease of £56,313 took place in our exports

of fish, while those of hewn timber expanded £215,888, while sawn lumber increased £787,007, both items indicating a recovery in the trade which is likely to be sustained in 1893.—*Canadian Trade Review*.

## BOGUS TEA IN RUSSIA.

Russia is a great country, and is especially eminent in the arts of adulteration. Some time ago a M. Gulishambaroff, a member of the Russian Technological Society, was greatly puzzled by the accidental discovery that the town of Kutai, on the Trans-Caucasian Railroad, in the year 1890, imported 1,500 poods of tea, no more than was needed for its own consumption, and exported 2,030 poods, although there was no tea plantation in the neighborhood. This set him to thinking and investigating, and presently he discovered that an enterprising merchant of Kytails had applied to the Caucasian Society of Rural Economy to give him special privileges for the manufacture of "Caucasian tea," of which he furnished them with samples. The chemical analyst of the Society discovered that the so-called tea was nothing more than the wild plant called "brussnik," which grows in profusion over the greater part of Russia. The preparation proved to be very simple, consisting merely in crumpling the leaves in the hand or treading them under the naked foot, and then drying them in the sun. An infusion was made but the taste was so bitter and abominable that nobody could be found to drink it, and the Society refused to have anything to do with it. The merchant thereupon turned his thoughts to the employment of "brussnik" as an adulterant, and appears to have started an enormous trade. The weed is worth six roubles a pood, while genuine tea is worth fifty-six; so that it is easy to imagine the immense profits to be made out of a mixture of the two. The cultivation of "brussnik" is said to be assuming the proportions of a national industry.

Last year, the Dominion Government spent in all some \$18,500 in improving the navigation of the Columbia River above Golden.

The time required for a journey round the earth by a man walking day and night without rest would be 425 days; an express train, forty days; sound, at a medium temperature, thirty-two and one-half hours; cannon ball, twenty-one and three-fourths hours; light, a little over one-tenth of a second; electricity, passing over a copper wire, a little less than one-tenth of a second.

The *Mark Lane Express*, in its weekly review of the British grain trade, says: April begins with English wheat at 25s, the lowest price on record. The average price obtained during March was profoundly discouraging. Although the granary reserves have fallen 705,000 quarters since New Year's Day, yet prices have receded 10d, with no recovery. The imported wheat supply afloat amounts to 2,800,000 quarters.