

A Pretoria Proclamation. A proclamation has been issued by the British authorities at Pretoria making the silver and gold coins of the late Transvaal Republic redeemable at their face values.

It will not be very many years before the holders of Kruger sovereigns and similar curiosities will be able to obtain fancy prices for these souvenirs of a sorrowful past.

Surprising Statistics. At the annual meeting of the Chamber of Mines, held at Bulawayo, on the 28th September, some surprising particulars regarding the production of gold were furnished. Notwithstanding the war, the total production of gold in Rhodesia for the year ended 30th June, exceeded that of the preceding year by \$154,440 in value. During the twelve months, 123,510 tons of ore were milled, yielding 65,053 ozs. valued at \$1,155,635. There are now forty mines yielding profitable returns, and it is thought that, in the course of two or three years, the value of the annual production of the yellow metal in romantic Rhodesia will exceed \$10,000,000.

Beer and Insurance. New schemes and fresh methods of insurance are created by demand. Following close upon the alarming discovery that some of the beer of the period recently sold in England has been arsenically treated, comes the announcement that a prominent accident and guarantee company are ready to consider proposals from brewers regarding the granting of policies indemnifying them against liability by reason of arsenic being found in the beer sold by them. At the same time the company are willing to insure the beer drinker to the tune of \$1,000, which sum will be paid to his representatives if they can prove that he died from the effects of arsenic mixed with brown October ale.

A Socialist Society and Fire Insurance. Wonderful are the ways of the so-called socialists—those who undertake to regulate property, industry and the sources of livelihood. These reorganizers of things in general are becoming enthusiastic in the movement having for its object the creation of municipal insurance funds. The following resolution passed by the British Socialist Society will serve to illustrate the desire of its members to secure the large profits of insurance companies and incidentally to bear the "small" losses. These Bristol socialists say:—

"Having regard to the large and increasing amounts paid in Bristol in insuring municipal property, and the small sums received in respect of losses, we are

of opinion that it is desirable a municipal insurance fund should be founded, in order to secure for the ratepayers the benefit of this class of business; and we, therefore, request the labour representatives on the council to take the necessary action to bring the same before the council."

The benefit of this class of business! We hope that the good burghers of Bristol will read some of the remarks upon Municipal Insurance which we reproduce elsewhere in this issue.

Superintendent Orear's Proposal. Canadian underwriters who had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Orear, the superintendent of the Missouri Insurance Department when he visited Montreal last summer, will be interested in his advocacy of a fire marshal law, the expenses of which, he suggests, should be paid out of the funds of the Insurance Department. The proposal will appear in his forthcoming annual report. Mr. Orear thus explains his position:—

"It may be argued that the maintenance of an office of this kind would be expensive and might be a tax upon the people. Let us see. When the Insurance Department was created by an Act of the Legislature in 1867, certain fees were provided by statute to be charged to the insurance companies to maintain the department. It was clearly the purpose of the law-makers that all the expenses of the department should be paid by the companies, but it was not expected to have the department become a revenue producer. Section 7,841 of the Revised Statutes provides that the State shall not be responsible in any manner for the payment of any expenses of the department, nor any charges connected therewith, and Section 7,850 of the Revised Statutes provides that in case the expenses of this department, including salaries, shall exceed the amount collected, the superintendent shall assess upon all companies doing business in the State a sum equal to such excess, such assessments to be collected in proportion to the relative amounts of the assets of the companies.

"For many years the fees collected by the department did not more than cover the expenses of maintaining the same, but the business has grown, and the number of companies and agents operating in the State so increased that the collection of fees by the department now exceeds the disbursements at least \$22,000 each year, to say nothing of the immense sum of \$275,000 in taxes collected by the department each year from the insurance companies.

"Is it not reasonable to have at least a part of this surplus expended in the improvement of conditions that will materially benefit the insured by reducing his premium rate, protect the lives and property of the citizen, prevent criminal destruction of property which produces taxes for State, counties and cities, and which will, to a large extent, lessen the hazard of underwriting."