

life insurance, in a sound company, than he can by either investing his money in stocks, real estate, or by allowing it to accumulate in banks. If he happens to die when his affairs are in a straitened condition, as often occurs, his creditors can attach the stocks, real estate or money in bank, but *not the life insurance policy*. The latter is bound to be paid to his wife and family, no matter how many hungry claimants may arise against the estate. Is it not a wise policy, therefore, asks the *U.S. Review*, for even a wealthy man to place a little of his money yearly in that safest of all investments—a policy of life insurance?

The statutory notices to policyholders, preliminary to the withdrawal from Ottawa of the deposits of the Briton Medical and General and of the Life Association of Canada, have been given on behalf of the stockholders of those companies. The first named is of London, Eng., and the last of Hamilton, Ont. Both of them ceased to seek for new business in Canada some years ago. Heavy death losses and heavy expenses combined, brought them to grief.

GOOD NEWS FROM NOVA SCOTIA.

Accustomed as we have long been to hear, from certain of the political journals, complaints of ruin and decay in Nova Scotia, and consequent unrest, dissatisfaction, not to say disaffection among her people, it is very pleasing to have something, from a good source, of a different tenor. The Halifax manager of the Mercantile Agency, Mr. G. E. Faulkner, sends us the following intelligent resume of the commercial position. Knowing as we do the extensive sources of information possessed by Dun, Wiman & Co., their circle of correspondents all over the province, their constant contact with business men, it is reassuring to hear from their representative in such a strain. If any one should be a pessimist, a "prophet of evil," surely it should be he, for he is sure to hear of trade difficulties and failures when there are any. But when, instead, we find him cheerful and hopeful, it is a good sign:

"As for the condition of trade we have had no 'booms' in Nova Scotia, but, what is better, a gratifying all round improvement in the condition of business is to be noted. In Halifax, mechanics and laboring men have had steady employment which has done a good deal to help local trade, while in the larger field of the province the conditions have been generally favorable. Drought affected crops in some sections, but taking the province as a whole the labors of the husbandman have had a good average reward and there is 'plenty in the land for man and beast.' Demand for farm and orchard products has been brisk and prices good. The result will doubtless be considerable additions to the savings' bank deposits of our farmers, that being the destination—a pretty permanent lock-up in most cases—of too large a proportion of their profits. Not the least of the boons in connection with the harvest has been the fine mild autumn we have had (which continues at date of writing) for handling and shipping produce. In the fisheries the catch has been below the average of recent years but prices are much better, having improved steadily through the season, which tones up the feelings and pockets of a large section of our population. It is the best season which this interest has had for four or five years.

"Our coal mines have not had so good a year since 1873; the output is larger than ever before, and prices better than they have

been since above date. Little or no improvement can be noted in the lumber business. Several large wood producers had their drives "hung up" last spring and scarcity of water throughout the season operated against the business seriously at some points, while prices generally have shown very little improvement. The coasting and smaller class of shipping trade has been more remunerative than for several years; coal shipments and movement of produce making business in that line particularly active at present. There has been comparatively little shipbuilding of late years and as many of the old vessels have gone to "Davie Jones' locker" there is now some employment for those which survive. Some indication is perceptible—only a faint glimmer perhaps—of improvement in shipping business generally, but the results have hardly commenced to accrue in tangible form yet and the hopes at present indulged in this connection may or may not be realized.

"Railway building in Cape Breton helps trade somewhat in that section of the province. Perhaps the chief and best cause for gratulation is in the general condition of healthfulness in trade, failures being below the average in number and mostly unimportant in extent or effect."

DRY GOODS.

While not much activity is expected in this line at this particular time, it is yet true that numerous parcels are being made, some of them in anticipation of Christmas. Heavy goods are not moving at wholesale, but the present "cold snap" assists in breaking retail stocks. Dress goods, too, are well out of wholesale hands. Men's wear and underwear are in request as a consequence of the colder weather. So are women's and children's wool wraps. In the direction of haberdashery, fancy kerchiefs, ornamental wool and silk goods, trinkets, notions, Berlin wool, floss, flosselle, there is a considerable enquiry. Such wares are in request for the holiday trade. Staples are quiet.

Spring parcels are not being made this year at this time to the same extent as in some by-gone years. This, while it may disappoint the eager importer, is by no means a disadvantage to the prudent retail merchant. It is in fact better that he should buy his spring goods in spring, rather than burden himself by taking unseasonable stock into his shop or give notes for future parcels ante-dated from two to three months, as, we are sorry to say, not a few are being pressed to do. Payments might be better, but they cannot generally be called bad. We observe a prudent disposition to sell a larger number of small or moderate parcels, rather than to put "many eggs into one basket." This, too, is a move which may be welcomed.

HARDWARE AND METALS.

In the department of metals and hardware, the feeling appears to be in the direction of an advance, the only drag upon which is the enormous stock of pig iron in Connal's yard in Glasgow. Prices, not only of pig but of other sorts of iron are kept down because of this; but on the other hand some iron-masters in Britain are reducing their out-put and in Middlesbrough district a like tendency is reported.

Meanwhile tin has undergone a decided advance, and prices in this market are higher. Copper is stiff at present quotations and there are signs of an upward movement in zinc,

both sheet and pig. The cable of yesterday reports an advance in steel plates, which may be expected to affect other steel goods. We remark a brisk Canadian demand for steel boiler tubes, boiler plates, and other steel goods. A number of iron workers in the Old Country are altering their plant for the making of steel. And it is to be remembered that the basic process enables smelters to use common ores which, it was thought, a few years ago, were not available for the purpose.

Not a great deal of pig iron has been sold in Western Ontario this season, we are told. The large orders sometimes customary have been with-held in a number of instances, and founders are often buying from hand to mouth. Glass is higher in Belgium, according to late advices, and stocks here are not large. Canadian prices are not yet advanced, however.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

"SLIPS OF TONGUE AND PEN," BY J. H. LONG, M. A., L. L. B., TORONTO; THE COPP, CLARK CO. LIMITED.

Errors in the use of language, whether in speaking or writing, are akin to noxious weeds in an otherwise fair garden, which should be assiduously extirpated; and he who does aught to that end may justly be esteemed a public benefactor. Such an instrumentality is the publication under notice, wherein the author has done efficient service in the line of work undertaken. (Occasionally the author perhaps unduly restricts the meaning of a word by adhering too closely to its etymology, unmindful of other conventional meanings which could be ill spared from the language.) Besides the grosser errors of speech and literary composition pointed out as prevalent, the niceties of language so to speak, are ably dealt with, and we can heartily commend the work as a scholarly disquisition and a valuable *vade mecum* to all who have the praiseworthy ambition to speak and write our noble English language with accuracy and propriety. Professor Eliot, of Harvard, thus recommends such work as Mr. Long has performed in the production before us:—"The only mental acquisition," says the Professor, "that I recognize as essential to the education of a lady or gentleman, is an accurate and refined use of the mother-tongue."

—We are glad to receive from the Maritime time provinces satisfactory accounts of the condition of their cotton factories, of late. We are told that the Nova Scotia Cotton Manufacturing Company has recently added to its buildings and machinery, and that it expects to increase largely the daily output of cottons. Large purchases of raw cottons were made by the company previous to the late advance and its production has been sold ahead several months. The cotton factory at Windsor N.S., is also reported as doing a profitable business and has more orders than it can overtake. Mr. Gibson also expresses himself highly satisfied with his Marysville cotton venture.

—A judgment of the County Court at Halifax reverses the decision in the case of the street car driver who was convicted of servile labor in the Police Court of Halifax for driving the cars on Sunday. Judge Johnstone says street car driving is not servile labor because it is "easy work" to drive a team of horses. Local lawyers laugh at the decision and say the Supreme Court, to which the case is to be carried, will confirm the Police Court conviction, in which case the street railway