

PROMINENT TOPICS.

The official statement of the terms offered to the Boers, which they rejected, has created considerable excitement in the old country as they are condemned almost universally as far more liberal than was just or prudent. Such terms as were first proposed to be offered were open to be regarded by foreign nations as evidence of England's weakness, of a desire to end the war at any cost to her honour, of indifference to the effect such liberal concessions would have upon the loyal inhabitants of Natal and Cape Colony. It has, indeed, been said, that the awful mistake made by Mr. Gladstone, after the Majuba Hill disaster, was being repeated to some extent by concessions to the Boers which they would misunderstand, and to which they had forfeited every claim. The Boers are now carrying on a guerilla warfare. Each one of the leaders is acting on his own responsibility. There is no government in existence which either controls the Boers or to which their officers are subject. To be offering terms to such men that would be most liberal were they worthy to be regarded as honourable foes, is a policy of "back down" which would inevitably lead to such distrust of England's power as would breed another conspiracy such as Mr. Kruger and his associates engineered and brought to an issue in October, 1899. The strength of the Empire must be displayed by bringing the Boers down to the knees as suppliants for peace; they provoked, they began the quarrel, it is for them to end it by absolute submission.

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The "Act to incorporate the St. Lawrence Lloyds" names the Hon. Robt. Mackay, Hon. R. Dandurand, Geo. E. Drummond, Hugh A. Allan, D. C. Campbell, Robt. Reford and John Torrance, all of this city, with F. H. and E. V. Clergue of Sault Ste. Marie, and Messrs. Douglas and Lewis of Philadelphia, as the shareholders. The capital stock is \$5,000,000. "The business of insurance shall not commence until \$100,000 has been paid up in cash, no shareholder's contribution to be less than 10 per cent. of his subscription. As soon as one million dollars have been subscribed and 10 per cent. paid to a chartered bank, a general meeting shall be called to elect directors. The Act provides that the company is to be authorized "to effect contracts of marine insurance with any person, against loss or damage of, or to sea-going vessels navigating the oceans or high seas from any port in Canada not above the harbour of Montreal to any other such port, or from one foreign port to another port, or for any British or foreign port to any port in Canada not above the harbour of Montreal." "The company may carry on the business of fire, inland marine, and inland transportation insurance as defined by The Insurance Act upon complying with said Act." The company may also own and navigate ice-breakers, and wreck-relieving steamers and appliances, and

carry on the business of a wrecking company." Clause 12 reads: "The company may receive by grant from any government or person, as aid in the construction, equipment and maintenance of the vessels and works provided for in this Act, as well as for the other purposes of the company, any Crown lands, or any real or personal estate or property, or any money, debentures, or subsidies, either as gifts, by way of bonus or guarantee, or in payment, or as subventions for services, and may dispose of the same, and may alienate such of the said property as is not required for the purpose of the company in carrying out this Act." The Act will be invalid in ten years unless operations are commenced within two years. The great flourish of large capital dwindles down to \$1,000,000 to be subscribed, and \$100,000 paid up. The sum of \$100,000 would be a trifling amount for such a project, more especially as, in addition to marine insurance on St. Lawrence and the Atlantic, power is sought to transact the business of fire insurance, wreckage, etc.

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The Barsalou-Gougeon-Pelletier case closed on 26th instant, by the jury finding all three prisoners guilty of arson. The rapidity with which a verdict was rendered showed how conclusive was the evidence of guilt, though the case had occupied fourteen days, the time of the Court having been wasted, as the custom of the day is, in discussing irrelevant issues, introduced apparently to confuse the jury. The three persons were proved up to the hilt to have conspired together to burn certain premises in this city for fraudulent purposes. In such affairs, when one criminal wishes to secure freedom by turning informer it is impossible to distribute the blame equally, if there is any inequality. In this case all three were so deeply in the plot that they all deserve the extreme penalty of the law.

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An Act is now before the House of Commons to incorporate the Canadian Mutual Aid Society. The objects are "to establish and maintain by means of assessments on all its members a benefit fund for the relief of its members in sickness, or disability, or accident, and generally to transact the business of insurance against sickness, disability and accident on the assessment plan, with all such powers and rights as are necessary or incidental to such purposes." The head office is to be at Windsor, Ont. Before policies are issued, a guarantee fund of \$5,000 is to be subscribed and 20 per cent. paid up, which, says the Act, "shall be liable for the payment of losses and may be deposited with the Minister of Finance and Receiver-General for that purpose." The objects, as stated above, are, in themselves, commendable, but that there is an opening for a new organization to meet them is not very apparent. There are numerous friendly societies who transact business for the relief of sick and disabled members, and the provision for accident insurance is ample at as moderate rates as