

trouble to procure a correct statement up to the present time, which I must ask you kindly to publish with this, for the information of the general public, so that each man may form his own opinion, and judge for himself as to how many of the agencies comply with the requirements of the statute referred.

*Memo. City Assessment on Fire Insurance Companies:*

	1863.	1864.	1865.
Acadia.....		\$232 30	\$773 67
Halifax.....	\$717 90	727 26	176 17
Liverpool & London.....	985 84	1,540 80	193 40
Royal.....	493 32	385 84	605 32
Phoenix.....	nil	260 64	264 68
Queen.....	685 80	716 10	342 90
N. B. & Mercantile.....			61 04
Lon. & Lancashire.....		160 00	353 48
Imperial.....			
American Offices (3).....	427 50	230 73	
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$2310 16</b>	<b>\$4253 61</b>	<b>\$2760 36</b>
	1866.	1867.	1868.
Acadia.....	\$642 85	\$1024 38	\$1055 50
Halifax.....	19 40	216 21	825 23
Liverpool & London.....	1427 53	nil	nil
Royal.....	139 65	856 64	nil
Phoenix.....	337 19	431 34	375 25
Queen.....	nil	529 57	nil
N. B. & Mercantile.....	60 52	145 75	350 35
Lon. & Lancashire.....	231 00	135 27	nil
Imperial.....		15 80	99 08
American Offices (3).....			20 57
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$2858 14</b>	<b>\$3354 97</b>	<b>\$2726 28</b>

The agents of some of these companies have, as will be seen, generally complied with the law, and it is because there are others who have not, as well as in justice to those who do, that I have ventured to direct public attention to the matter. The statement also shows that the London and Liverpool, although doing a large business, made no general returns for 1867, and paid no taxes for 1867-68. The Royal, generally punctual, made returns, but paid no taxes either for current year. The Queen made no return for two years, and escaped taxes for 1868 and 1866 and 1878, and the London and Lancashire paid nothing for the current year, while at the same time, the Acadia and Halifax, doing a much smaller business, in consequence of being restricted by their charters, than most of the companies referred to, have, by a compliance with the laws of the land, which others have disregarded, taken a large amount annually from their shareholders to pay the city assessment made on their entirety, in consequence of their having made the necessary returns. My object now, Mr. Editor, is to inquire if this cannot and should not at once be looked into and remedied. If we have a law on our statute book requiring returns to be made under a penalty of \$20 per month, whether some steps should not be at once taken to bring these refractory agents to book. It is manifestly unfair that foreign Companies should escape taxation, while the local ones, doing a much smaller amount of business, are called upon to contribute so largely to the city funds. I hope the Attorney General may consider it his duty to take the matter in hand as he will find, if he looks sharply after it, that a very considerable amount in the shape of penalties may now be recovered, which, in the present impoverished condition of the Provincial Treasury, would, I presume, be very acceptable.

A curious "accident insurance" case has just been decided in Chicago. A fireman insured for \$2,000 in the Travellers' Insurance Company, was so injured at a fire that he afterward became delirious. During his delirium he took poison and died. The company provides in its policies that nothing can be collected in case of suicide, whether the party be sane or insane when the act is committed. The insurance in this case was claimed on the ground that the real cause of death was the accident which produced the fireman's

insanity. The court decided that the direct and not the remote chance of death was the one insured against.

HARTFORD FIRE INSURANCE COMPANIES.—The following is a statement of the assets of the Hartford Fire Insurance Companies, January 1, 1869:

	Capital.	Surplus.	Total Assets.
Ætna.....	\$3,000,000	\$2,150,931.71	\$5,150,931.71
Hartford.....	1,000,000	1,113,556.22	2,113,556.22
Phoenix.....	600,000	867,835.60	1,467,835.60
North American.....	300,000	149,859.65	449,859.65
Merchants'.....	200,000	246,900.00	446,900.00
Connecticut.....	200,000	142,613.50	342,613.50
City Fire.....	250,000	250,000.00	500,000.00
Putnam.....	400,000	150,000.00	550,000.00
Charter Oak.....	150,000	75,000.00	225,000.00
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$7,500,000</b>	<b>\$5,145,796.68</b>	<b>\$12,645,796.68</b>

The Ætna has \$289,553.98 of outstanding losses unpaid; the Phoenix, \$131,970.62, and the Hartford about \$100,000. The remainder have net assets as above. Dividends have been declared during the year as follows:

	per cent.	Value.
Ætna.....	16	\$480,000
Hartford.....	16	160,000
Phoenix.....	16	96,000
North American.....	12	36,000
Merchants'.....	12	24,000
Connecticut.....	12	24,000
City Fire.....	12	30,000
Charter Oak.....	10	15,000
<b>Total.....</b>		<b>\$865,000</b>

OCEAN MARINE LOSSES IN 1868.—The following capitulation shows the number of vessels lost during each month of 1868, and their estimated value:

Months.	No. of Vessels.	Value.
January.....	38	\$1,141,000
February.....	33	930,000
March.....	44	1,158,000
April.....	41	800,000
May.....	23	640,000
June.....	19	560,000
July.....	14	185,000
August.....	31	698,000
September.....	26	582,000
October.....	25	587,000
November.....	27	890,000
December.....	41	992,000
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>\$10,030,000</b>

A young man named John Robertson, who for about three years had been insurance agent in Galt, absconded last week.

LOSSES BY FIRE IN THE UNITED STATES.

Total losses in 1856.....	\$21,150,000
" " 1857.....	15,792,000
" " 1858.....	11,561,000
" " 1859.....	16,058,000
" " 1860.....	15,597,000
" " 1861.....	18,020,000
" " 1862.....	17,640,000
" " 1863.....	14,060,000
" " 1864.....	28,522,000
" " 1865.....	43,139,000
" " 1866.....	66,410,000
" " 1867.....	36,905,000
" " 1868.....	34,757,000
<b>Total losses in thirteen years.....</b>	<b>\$338,811,000</b>

Railway News.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.—Traffic for week ending Dec. 25, 1868.

Passengers.....	\$27,899 42
Freight and live stock.....	52,259 18
Mails and sundries.....	2,649 39
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$82,807 99</b>
Corresponding Week of '67.....	72,560 09
<b>Increase.....</b>	<b>\$10,247 90</b>

THE ST. STEPHENS BRANCH RAILWAY, N. B. has been doing a prosperous business during the past season. The receipts for the year ending 31st Dec., 1868, are \$110,000, while those of the year previous only amounted to \$79,000. The up freights still continue good, as the lumber operators and St. John River merchants use this road to forward supplies. The down freight is now very small as the St. Croix is closed and it is difficult to ship lumber.

THE SHERBROOKE AND EASTERN TOWNSHIPS RAILWAY.

Mr. R. Oughtred who was engaged in the preliminary survey to Westbury, for the proposed Wooden Railway from this place to Weedon reported to the Town Council, the result of his explorations, from which we make a few extracts:

He says, the first two and three quarter miles from the Grand Trunk Depot, can be graded to about 80 feet to the mile, but will be very expensive on account of the long deep cut required through the high bank on the easterly side of the St. Francis. If, however, the Railway was to start at or near the top of the bank of the river the grade would be easy and the expense only ordinary. For the next two and a half miles there is a descent of about 124 feet, and can be graded to 50 feet per mile, the first mile and a half rather expensive, the ground being ledgy and broken, the remaining mile of the section being very easy to make. For the next section of three and a half miles there is a rise in the whole distance of about 49 feet and will only require a road bed to be built, no cutting or filling being necessary. For the next section of one and three quarter miles the grade descends in that direction 53 feet, and will only require a road bed, with no cutting or filling. The next section on the Winslow brook of about half a mile can easily be graded to about 40 feet per mile at ordinary expense by descending gradually down the slope to the banks of said brook and bank of the River St. Francis for about a mile and a quarter from the beginning of the last mentioned section. The whole distance, surveyed and levelled, being about eleven miles from Sherbrooke. The route on the whole is more favorable than Mr. Oughtred or any one else expected, as to the grade, and can be shortened a good deal if more expense is incurred in cutting off some small angles and fill up some small hollows.

The route thus established will be seen to be favorable to laying down by and by iron rails instead of wood, and in the whole distance surveyed the principal expense will be in the grading for iron rails the first three or three and a half miles. At first for the wooden rails the great part of this expense need not be incurred, and the wooden track can be used for doing the extra grading required, whenever the business of the road calls for iron instead of wood rails. Owing to the great depth of snow it is not thought advisable to continue the survey further at present, nor is it necessary, as it is known no impediments exist up the St. Francis beyond the point now reached, the supposed difficulties being to get from the Grand Trunk Depot across the height of land on the east side of the St. Francis. It is now demonstrated that these difficulties were more imaginary than real, and can be easily overcome. It might be well for the inhabitants in Dudswell, Weedon and other Townships interested to get up petitions to Parliament in favor of the charter being granted. We may add that the proposed line goes into the Township of Stoke in two places and if finally established it will be of great advantage to the settlers there, and tend to induce others to locate in that township, a thing much to be desired. It will also be of great service to this Town in opening up lands from which great quantities of fire wood can be brought by the Railway at small expense.—*Sherbrooke Gazette.*