

1892	77	"	40.20	114.06
1893	78	"	39.55	123.82
1894	79	"	38.90	134.73
1895	80	"	38.25	147.46
1896	81	"	37.55	161.60
1897	82	"	36.85	177.30
1898	83	"	36.10	194.56
1899	84	"	35.30	214.36
1900	85	"	34.40	238.55
1901	86	"	33.40	268.68
1902	87	"	32.30	306.02
1903	88	"	31.10	349.69
1904	89	"	29.80	398.86
1905	90	"	28.30	457.54
1906	91	"	26.50	535.47
1907	92	"	24.50	647.26
1908	93	"	22.00	787.18
1909	94	"	19.00	860.14
1910	95	"	15.00	1003.00
Totals			\$1483.57	\$7198.29

Our friend's actual payments, down to and including 1887, are given in the third column. Thereafter the probable calls are shown, assuming that the profits will be on about the same increasing scale as heretofore. In the final column nothing but the actual tabular cost of each year's death losses is given, due to the age attained, with \$3.00 added to cover expenses. It is a pay-as-you-go column, supposing the mortality to be the same per \$1,000 as that hitherto experienced among insured lives on this continent. At age 95 only three persons, according to the experience table, are supposed to be alive, out of 100,000 persons starting in at the age of ten, and those three all die in the early part of the year; so that for that year's insurance each one has to pay in \$1,000 in order to leave \$1,000 to his heirs. The whole cost of the pay-as-you-go, or natural premium plan, is shown to be \$7,198.29 for \$1,000 of insurance upon a man entering at 56 and living until 95. On the regular plan, devised about 150 years ago to overcome the evils of the natural system, the whole payments for the same time, are shown to be approximately, less than \$1,500. And yet certain interested parties now commend the discarded natural-premium system as a cheap one, merely because it calls for a little less money in the first ten or fifteen years.

Some things are "cheap," and as worthless as they are cheap. Excellence and durability usually cost something. Many things which are natural and cheap can be improved by art, and made much more valuable by a slight expenditure. "Pay as you go and get what you pay for" is good enough advice, in the abstract, but only a fool would apply it to buying only one day's food, or one week's fuel, or one month's clothing, or one year's title, at a time, to a piece of land, on which to erect a valuable dwelling. What wholesale or retail merchant erects a warehouse or store of material lasting only for one year, or never invests money or credit in buying goods when the market is favorable, which goods he knows he may not sell for months or years? A mechanic, in buying a tool or machine, seeks one whose value will still be considerable, after years of service has been taken out of it; and what farmer buys a reaper or wagon, a plough or a grindstone without paying many years in advance of getting the whole value out of the article? And what fruit grower urges us to plant our orchards with natural apple trees or wild cherry trees merely because they are

the natural article and to get an improved stock would be paying money years in advance of the crop-picking time.

At all events our insured friend of seventy-two winters is very thankful that he was induced to buy a good article, which, though costing a little more the first ten years, only assesses him \$143.10 in 1887, as against the \$76.73 he would have had to pay this year on the natural-premium plan. If he were to stop his payments any time he could get paid-up insurance equal to nearly all he has paid to the company; but his next year's cost will be only half the natural premium, and should he live ten years more it will no doubt be less than a quarter. Two years hence he will have paid a total of about \$002 for his nineteen years' insurance as contrasted with \$925.33 which the natural or so-called cheap system would have called for. As his payments are now small and getting smaller, he continues paying with cheerfulness. If he had been upon the other plan his courage would probably have yielded some years ago to his fears of inability to hold out to the end, and all he had paid in would have been left behind. It is well known that neither the assessment nor the natural-premium plan affords any surrender value at any stage, even though the cost in the end be nearly five times greater than in a regular company, as in the illustration above given.

FIRE ASSURANCE IN CANADA DURING 1886.

The business of fire underwriting in Canada does not appear to grow rapidly more remunerative, nor does the lot of those who follow it seem to become easier or pleasanter year by year. Indeed one might think that, like the rate of interest on loans, or like the scale of profit on merchandise, the margin between loss and gain in fire insurance was being steadily narrowed. Compacts, as they are called in the States, agreements by mutuals, the tariff of the associated underwriters, even these do not place the business on the remunerative plane it is expected to occupy. With a larger business than before, the year 1886 closed with a greater ratio of fire loss than its predecessor. About this time twelve-months, we were congratulating the companies upon the fact that the loss-ratio had been reduced from 63 and 64 per cent. respectively, in the two preceding years to 56½ per cent. in the 1885 business. But here we are confronted with a relapse during 1886 to the former figure, or worse. This can scarcely be called encouraging. Let us look, somewhat closely, at the figures presented in the Abstract of Fire Insurance Returns for the Dominion, just issued by the superintendent. We must condense greatly in this column, but particulars may be found in the table on page 1320.

1886.	Net Prem's.	Losses.	Amount Insured.
20 British Co's.....	\$3,429,012	\$2,332,198	\$393,166,340
6 Canadian ".....	1,107,710	722,636	142,685,145
4 American ".....	395,613	231,190	50,921,837
Total.....	\$4,932,335	\$3,286,014	\$586,773,522

The British companies have suffered the heaviest losses, proportionately, and next

to them the Canadian. Both show a much heavier loss-ratio than in the previous year, while the American companies show a lighter one.

RATIO OF LOSS TO PREMIUM.

	1886.	1885.
British Companies.....	68.59	56.64
Canadian ".....	66.75	56.60
American ".....	56.59	57.45
All Companies.....	66.04	56.57

RATIO OF PREMIUM TO RISK.

	1886.	1885.
British Companies.....	1.136	1.001
Canadian ".....	1.283	1.011
American ".....	1.055	.978
All Companies.....	1.157	1.002

RATIO OF EXPENSES TO PREMIUMS.

	1886.	1885.
British Companies.....	25.45	16.17
Canadian ".....	32.53	29.40
American ".....	24.63	23.41
All Companies.....	26.97	23.39

Notwithstanding the marked improvement, as compared with 1885, which the home companies show, in ratio of premium paid to risk carried, the profit outlook for them is exceedingly dim; increased expenses and an increase of fires bring the expenditure up to 99 per cent. of the premiums, where the outlay of the British is 94, and of the American 81 per cent.

The list of companies transacting fire insurance in the Dominion is nearly the same as in the previous year, the only change being the addition of the Connecticut Fire to the list, which now numbers thirty. The total net premiums of 1886 amounted to \$4,932,000, insuring \$505,000,000 where in 1885 the premiums were \$4,852,000, covering \$486,000,000. Losses by fire, incurred during 1885 had been \$2,744,000, but last year they swelled to \$3,286,000.

TORONTO TRADE FIGURES.

The total value of imports at the port of Toronto for the month of April 1877, is \$1,651,227, as compared with \$1,416,474 for the same month of 1886. Of the imports this year \$272,431 worth was free goods. Exports amounted to \$242,323 in value, making the aggregate for the month \$1,893,550. Among dry goods, woollens show a very marked increase and cottons a distinct decline. We give below a comparison of principal articles which go to form the total we have mentioned:

	Ap'l 1887.	Ap'l 1886.
Cotton goods.....	\$ 98,332	\$110,864
Fancy goods.....	41,193	40,534
Hats and bonnets.....	52,834	51,157
Silk goods.....	47,483	48,534
Woollen goods.....	167,193	121,601
Total dry goods.....	\$407,035	\$372,690
Books and pamphlets....	34,072	26,190
Coal anthracite.....	139,899	157,785
do bituminous.....	114,495	97,913
Drugs and medicines....	18,788	17,419
Fruit, green and dried...	27,132	14,875
Glass and glassware....	26,016	17,595
Iron and steel goods....	139,240	108,992
Jewellery and watches...	30,983	25,829
Leather goods.....	38,668	27,853
Musical instruments....	18,068	9,330
Paper goods.....	38,343	37,917
Wood goods.....	18,437	13,417

Value of exports for the month, of goods the produce of Canada, is \$219,612, which is less, by some \$10,000, than the same month last year. The largest item is field products, \$101,678, barley constituting \$94,131. Next in order is animals and their produce, \$65,036, horses, horned cattle,