

only exaggerates in discarding the platitudes. These are the very opposite of the pathetic little "Life Insurance Story," which we published; but both are truthful conceptions of the workings of life insurance in society; and here in Chicago within the past year, we have had many instances that prove truth is tranger than fiction. — *Chicago Banking and Insurance Chronicle*.

Eloquent Passage.

One of the finest things George D. Prentice ever wrote is this inimitable passage: "It cannot be that earth is man's only abiding place. It cannot be that our life is a bubble cast by the ocean of eternity to float a moment upon its waves and sink into nothingness. Else why is it that the high and glorious aspirations which leap like angels from the temple of our hearts, are for ever wandering unsatisfied? Why is it that the rainbow and cloud come over us with a beauty that is not of earth, and then pass off to leave us to muse on their loveliness? Why is it that the stars which hold their festival around the midnight throne, are set above the grasp of our limited faculties, forever mocking us with their unapproachable glory? And finally, why is it that the bright forms of human beauty are presented to our view and taken from us, leaving the thousand streams of our affection to flow back in an Alpine torrent upon our hearts? We are born for a higher destiny than of earth. There is a realm where the stars will be spread out before us, like islands that slumber in the ocean, and where the beautiful beings which pass before us like shadows will stay for ever in our presence." — *New-York Tablet*.

Mexican Silver Mines.

A newly discovered mine belongs to any person who denounces it, provided a shaft of at least ten varas in depth be sunk on the vein within sixty days after it is denounced. A claim consists of 200 varas square. Mines that have been abandoned, or those in which work has been suspended for a space of four consecutive months, may also be denounced. The reducing and crushing work (*haciendas de beneficio*) are considered as having been abandoned, and may become the property of whomsoever denounces them when they no longer serve for their original purpose—when the roots have fallen in and the machinery has been removed—but the owner has a delay of four months to resume operations if he wishes to preserve his property. A miner or the proprietor of metallurgical works can be expropriated by his creditors who may take possession of a mine and work it for their own benefit until the debt contracted by the owner is extinguished; but they are compelled by law to allow him sufficient means to maintain himself and family. A shepherd or a laboring man accidentally discovers near these *crestones*, which rise above the surface, quartz containing metallic substances. He endeavors to procure some rock at a depth where it has not felt the action of the atmospheric air, builds a fire in which he casts a few pieces of ore at a very high temperature, and if specks of silver are observed the mine is denounced for the purpose of securing possession of it to the discoverer. The law requires a shaft to be sunk in the vein of at least ten varas within 60 days after the denouncement, at the expiration of which if the mine has been ascertained to be a new one, or to have ceased to be the property of a former denouncer, a grant is made of 200 varas square. The grantee then procures partners to develop the mine, should he lack capital for that purpose. The value of the mine is divided into twenty four shares, called *barras*, the half of which is given over to the capitalists, named *aviadores*. The regular development of the mine then commences. When a depth has been reached where silver is generally the most abundant, and the quantity of water and expenses of extracting not yet too considerable, the yield is very remunerative; at this stage of development, reducing works are erected (*haciendas de beneficio*) frequently on a large scale not always based on the future general yield of the veins. At the same time underground work is carried on to facilitate operations, as also the extraction of the ore, and the draining of the mine. When mines in the bonaza condition are in the hands of one individual, as in the case of Counts de Valenciana and Reglas, and the Marquis de Rayas, these works are remarkable not only for their magnificence and extent, but for their utility in prosperous times, when without them the ores becoming poorer could not be extracted through the older communications. In most cases at the present day the 24 varas, which constitute the shares of a mine, are divided into

small fractions, and represent numerous conflicting interests which seem to combine but for one purpose that of realising from the undertaking as much as possible, disregardful, of the evil consequences which may affect the future prosperity of the mine. Their motto appears to be "Sufficient unto the day is the profit thereof." The consequences of this view of mining operations is that no regular and methodical course is pursued, the richest ore only being extracted at several places at the same time, or where it is most easily obtained, masses of poorer ore being left behind, the working of which is resumed when the bonanza ceases. It is difficult to understand why a small amount of these enormous profits is not devoted to researches which are undertaken, only when the expenses exceed the profits, and the prospects of a profitable investment are doubtful. When the zone of the greatest yield has been worked through, if the depth is such as to render the cost of extradition too considerable, the bonaza ceases. The poorest ore left in upper parts of the mine is then worked, and as the greatest expense is the draining, the water is allowed to fill the lower works. For some time the reserve of ore of medium yield is sufficient to cover expenses; but beyond a certain point, day or contract work for a certain weight of ore extracted is no longer profitable; and in order to guard against the chances of loss, the miners are allowed an interest in the profits, say one sixth, one third, and even one-half of what they extract. The owner furnishes tools, light and powder, the draining and hoisting being also at his expense. This is called *partido*; the miners, who are then called *buscones*, prefer it to day or task work, and as it is voluntary labor they take it easy, and find a certain charm to be indebted to chance for their salary, which will frequently in one week, be enormous, after working for a month or more without earning scarcely sufficient for their maintenance. Gradually the resources are exhausted, and the number of men only required by law are kept at work, in order to retain possession of the mine, and new *aviadores* are found who supply the funds necessary for the expense of draining and continuing the work in the lower part of the mine, running prospecting drifts at points where ore was expected to be found, but which had been neglected when the mine was full of water. — *New Orleans Price Current*.

OFFICIAL NOTICES.



NOTICE.

The Bureau of Education was closed in Montreal on the 20th Oct. and reopened on the 5th Nov. in Quebec, where all correspondence should be addressed to the Hon. the Minister of Public Instruction.

LOUIS GIARD,
Superintendent of Education.

NOMINATIONS.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

His Excellency, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, on the 4th Nov. 1867, was pleased to make the following nominations:—

Mr. Pierre Chauveau, to be French Corresponding Clerk, Assistant Editor of the *Journal de l'Instruction Publique*, and Librarian, in place of A. N. Montpetit, Esq., transferred to the Hon. The Provincial Secretary's Office.

Mr. Patrick Delaney, to be English Corresponding Clerk and Assistant Editor of the *Journal of Education*, in place of J. J. Phelan, Esq., Advocate, transferred to another Department.

Mr. Alfred Thomas, to be Accountant and Clerk of Statistics, in place of Alexandre de Lusignan, Esq., resigned.

Mr. Léopold Devisme, to be Assistant French Corresponding Clerk, in place of J. B. Lenoir, Esq., transferred to the Hon. The Provincial Secretary's Office.

Mr. J. B. Marcoux, to be Assistant Clerk of Accounts and Statistics, in place of Pierre Chauveau, Esq., transferred to another Department.

JACQUES CARTIER NORMAL SCHOOL.

Mr. Joseph Octave Cassegrain, to be Regular Professor, in the Normal School, in place of T. Dostaler, Esq., deceased.

Mr. Arthur Duval, to be Professor, in place of J. O. Cassegrain, Esq., appointed Regular Professor.