

injury of his former principal." The law declares that one who leaves the service of another must speak the truth of his late employer, and be guilty of no fraud or deceit at his expense, as if he does he is responsible for any damages he may cause. Beyond that the law places no constraint on an agent after quitting an employer, unless some special contract has been violated. Companies know that agents may leave at any time, and transfer their knowledge, skill and patronage to any rival of a late employer, or set up a rival business. The Court found then that this agent, being free to leave, had only exercised his legal rights in persuading the policy holders to transfer their policies to companies he had become interested in, and those policies have to be cancelled by his late employers and premiums for unexpired time returned. To prevent such a result, a contract should be signed binding an agent not to act in that capacity in a certain district for so many years.

#### Chinese Currency.

CHINA retains the same system of currency as is spoken of in the Old Testament, that is, it is based upon a certain weight of silver, and not upon the denomination of any coin. Mexican dollars are in use, but they are all defaced before being put in circulation, thus \$1,000 Hong Kong currency does not mean 1,000 dollar pieces, but 717 taels weight of them. If they are new, 1,000 will weigh 720½ taels, and 717 taels, the standard, would consist of 995 pieces. The tael is about 579.84 English grains of silver. On presenting a check for \$10,000 in a Chinese bank, if coin is desired, 7170 taels weight of dollars would be served for it, containing about 9,950 pieces. Cheques and bank notes are most generally used, silver being so cumbersome. The aggregate circulation of the Shanghai banks is \$6,000,000. There are coins for 50, 20, 10 and 5 cents, so that business is chiefly done without recourse to the weight system. In the settlement, however, between banks, and shipments to pay for produce, coin is always weighed in the proportion above stated.

#### The defeat of Tammany: a local lesson.

HOWEVER the politicians may differ as to the causes of and the consequences likely to follow the recent defeat of the Democratic party, there is no question about one feature of the elections. The "machine" styled Tammany, in New York, has been overwhelmingly crushed at the polls, owing to the indignation of the respectable citizens at its infamous proceedings. Tammany simply meant organized vice and scoundrelism, which had been allowed to rule New York for years until its business roused the anger of those whose apathy in municipal affairs had allowed this shameless organization to flourish. An investigation now going on has brought out evidence that the police force in New York, from the Chief downwards, was in the pay of the most vicious classes, upon whom they levied systematic blackmail. It is estimated that from these sources Tammany officials and hangers on received several millions of dollars every year! One keeper of

a vile resort testified that she had paid \$12,000 to police officials, and many others gave similar evidence of large payments to them, in return for which they winked at their doings, and even assisted these vultures to secure their prey. If it had not been proved in Court, we could not have believed that judges, magistrates, one senator, several mayors, chiefs and sergeants of police, all manner of city officials, were in this organization, and shared its infamy. New York, the American nation, indeed the civilized world is to be congratulated on the crushing blow given to this nest of moral, or immoral, vermin, for it was the worst scandal ever known to representative institutions. The lesson is an obvious one, Tammany was the child of indifference to public duties on the part of the more well-to-do classes. Had those who killed it at the polls done their duty as citizens in the past, Tammany could not have been organized. This city is waking up to the danger of this indifference. It is organizing a Good Government league, which has already enlisted in its ranks a large number of our most responsible and intelligent citizens. This is a salutary step, an ominous one to some whose ways and doings are akin to those of Tammany, but one that promises to shield this city from actions and influences adverse to its welfare.

#### Supplementary benefits of fire insurance.

OWNERS of properties owe to fire insurance companies a most valuable extent of protection which they seldom, if ever, realize. The whole system of fire brigades in cities and towns is a development of the crude measures adopted by the fire insurance companies in their early days, and, in a large number of cases, the very existence of an efficient fire brigade is owing to the efforts made by underwriters. To their regulations and inspection is to be attributed the great advance made in recent years in appliances for avoiding fire risks, and the precautions adopted by architects and builders to minimize these dangers. A very striking instance of the supplementary benefits of fire insurance has recently occurred at Richmond. The Tredegar Iron Works at that place are very extensive, the buildings and plant being so valuable that the owners were able to cover them to the extent of \$251,500 fire insurance, spread amongst 31 companies. The London & Liverpool & Globe out of this carried \$66,000. Some time ago the South Eastern Tariff Association required the owners to carry out certain improvements of a protective character, such as iron doors and shutters, etc., so as, as far as possible, to isolate the various sections of the works from each other in case of fire. These so fortified the risk, says the *Insurance Herald*, that in case of fire every special agent who inspected the plant was of opinion "that only 25 per cent. could be burnt." This has turned out correct, as, though the recent fire was so disastrously severe, the loss will be under 30 per cent., and the owners have frankly acknowledged that they have been saved a ruinous loss by the precautions insisted upon by the underwriters. Policy holders are apt to resent the interference of insurance inspectors, and to disregard their suggestions; but a little reflection would convince them that whatever interest an insuring company has in precautions against fire is very greatly exceeded by that of the person who effects the insurance.