

pretty Ohio town, \$262,000. All these are sufficiently close to Toronto to cause our property owners and our underwriters to look grave and to wonder when our turn may come.

It is noted by our contemporary that the losses for the first half of 1903 were over three million dollars less than for the same period of 1902, and more than five million dollars lighter than the amount chargeable against the first half of 1901. "As to fire loss the fire underwriters have fared reasonably well this year, but the fall in security values will unfavorably affect many of their statements. Still rates are now, in general, on a paying basis, and the insurance interest has less reason to complain than heretofore."

CROP PROSPECTS.

The weather since our last has been excellent growing weather as a rule in Ontario as well as in the prairie country, with the exception of excessive wet in parts of South West Ontario. The June rains did an immense amount of good, and while it was impossible to overcome to the full the long drought of May, the hay and some grain crops are better than could have been expected a month ago. Our Winnipeg man wired at noon yesterday: "Weather for the past week has been almost perfect for the growing crop. The condition of the wheat, without any exception, has never been better; the straw in most places is not high, being between eighteen inches and two feet; there is no premature heading out, and no damage to speak of from want of rain. A report comes from Clearwater in Southwestern Manitoba, that wheat thereabout will be ready to cut in three weeks.

From St. John's, Sherbrooke, Waterloo and other points in the Eastern Townships of the province of Quebec, come accounts of the condition of the crops which are reassuring. The hay crop will undoubtedly be light, as a result of the prolonged drought in May and early June, but roots are generally good and grain is very promising. The Waterloo Advertiser notes that rains have been frequent and adequate thereabout of late: "Haying will probably be later than usual. Grain of all kinds is making rapid growth and promises a big harvest. Potatoes never looked better at this season, and the same may be said of all roots. Corn is backward. The pastures have been greatly freshened."

BY VIOLENCE AND STEALTH.

The recent attempt of the Toronto Street Railway Company to take violent possession of part of Avenue Road in this city, is a disgrace to the company. It was an attempt to do by stealth what the company had good reason to know it would not be permitted to do openly. And it looked as if it were trying to place itself, by midnight lawlessness, in a position to say: "We are in possession," believing such possession nine points of the law. Who is responsible for such discreditable procedure as the attempt on Friday night last, by violence, to connect the company's city system of rails with those of a suburban company? Not the company's engineer, surely, for he has some respect for law and fair play. Whoever gave the order, the company's is the responsibility for an attempt at "American" methods of settling disputes. This one was frustrated by the prompt action of a city official. Is it possible that their experience of the administration of the city's business has produced such contempt in the minds of the managers of this tramway, as to cause them

to think the only way to "get even," is by means of clandestine procedure and the use of main force? Surely we are not as bad as that! In any case, it is well for the city to know that the Toronto Railway Company will stick at nothing to accomplish its ends, and to be on the look-out for any manifestation of its peculiar tactics.

LIFE ASSURANCE.

It is a curious thing that life assurance agents or canvassers have often much trouble in getting young men, or even middle-aged men, to perceive the value of a life policy or policies, whether as a means of thrift, through being stimulated to work and save to keep up payments, or whether as an investment, a safe place to put savings in order to get the benefit of them when older. Some assurance solicitors are able occasionally to get a young and perhaps ambitious fellow to see that he would do well to husband his small but growing salary. But almost any agent can do better than this—he can get and pour into the mind of his intending applicant for insurance the testimony of people who are already assured.

A contemporary cites a communication received from a pleased policy-holder on the satisfactory maturing of a twenty year endowment policy, thus: "My little investment has brought to me nearly four per cent. on my investment, besides life insurance for nothing for twenty years. I wish now I had made it double the amount, for one cannot get back the time he lives nor the money he wastes." And as an older instance of almost exactly the same sort from an older insurant, the Toledo "Bee" tells a story of what an elderly and rich man of that city confided to the writer. Said he: "I worked like a slave until I was forty-five years old to make a fortune, and have had to watch it like a policeman ever since to save it. My life assurance policies have really given me the least trouble of all my possessions. They have never fluctuated, but have steadily increased in value, have called for no watching on my part, and are worth more year by year. I took out the first ones in a half doubting way as to their ever being much good, except possibly to my family in case of early death. But I was young then. I have taken a good deal since as a protection to them and an investment for myself in order that I might have at least one line of securities that wouldn't keep me awake at night, nor my eye on the market reports by day. I suppose you would call me a pretty heavily assured man were I to tell you what I carry. But had I my life to live over I would cheerfully saddle myself with double the amount early in the game."

A happy characterization of the sums of money paid in the shape of premiums on life insurance policies is made by the Argus, which calls them "enforced savings." That is to say, enforced spontaneously and voluntarily by man upon himself. The value of such a habit of self-denial and regularity is very great, often keeping a man from needless and therefore wasteful spending. As the day approaches for renewal payment of premium, the feeling is: "I owe so many dollars and cents on my life policies," not: "Now I am going to deposit so much in a savings bank." Comparisons are sometimes made between the latter useful institutions and life policies, but where, asks the Argus, "is the man who would keep up year in and year out for, say, a couple of decades, the habit of placing a fixed sum of money in the savings bank with the same regularity he would use in paying his life insurance premiums? Even if he did, and the chances are a thousand