

in July, 1891, the arrangements were complete. The undertaking was, however, no ordinary one, for the Queen had funds of over £1,544,000; and a premium income which in 1890 was £739,468, with a business which extended through the United Kingdom and the United States and Canada. Much was added by this amalgamation to the influence of the Royal, which thus became the greatest insurance corporation in existence.

"Very active interest was taken by Mr. McLaren in the Liverpool Salvage Committee, and in the prevention of fires. In the lessening of fire risks he did a public service of importance, such risks being, of course, a burden on the business of the port. His experience in insurance matters, it may be added, was almost unique, for in a career of more than fifty-two years he passed through every grade of insurance business, and was master even of its minutest details. Two years ago he celebrated his professional jubilee, an occasion on which he was the recipient of some gratifying testimonials. During his management the Royal has had to face the historic fires of Chicago in 1871, Boston in 1872, St. John, New Brunswick, in 1877, and St. John's, Newfoundland, in 1893; but though the company has borne its share of the loss, the wisdom of its policy has enabled it to pass through these reverses, as well as the gigantic losses in the Liverpool cotton fires last year, without a shadow on its credit or fame. In a word, the late manager of the Royal has been conspicuous among those whose business talents have at once made the insurance companies of Liverpool the first in the world, and laid the foundations of their credit broad and deep. But the responsibilities and anxieties of his position were, nevertheless, heavy, and he has closed at too early an age an important and strenuous career, passing from among a wide circle of friends, to whom his accomplishments and pleasant and engaging manners had endeared him. Mr. McLaren was a man of much taste and cultivation, possessed of unflinching tact and good humor."

#### FIRES IN NEW BRUNSWICK.

One of our St. John exchanges devotes a column to the Fire Fiend and his ravages in New Brunswick during 1893, which will stand as one famous for extensive and disastrous fires. And not only were there several and severe conflagrations, but there was a largely increased number of small fires and a total of heavy losses by reason of them. A review is given by the *Telegraph* of some of the more disastrous of the visitations, with a summary of the totals for the months already passed of 1893.

In the whole province there were for January 26 fires, of which six destroyed over \$1,000 worth of property each.

In February there were 39 fires, 12 of which caused a loss of \$1,000.

In March there were 34, six over \$1,000 each.

In April, 34, with six over \$1,000 each.

In May, 23, with seven over \$1,000 each.

In June, 34, with 13 over \$1,000 each.

In July, 31, with 12 over \$1,000 each.

In August, 23, with six over \$1,000 each.

In September, 17, with eight over \$1,000 each.

In October, 24, with nine over \$1,000 each.

In November, up to Thursday last, 20, with six over \$1,000 each.

A very small percentage of the above losses belong to St. John city. Here are, however, more than three hundred fires in eleven months, between ninety and a hundred of

them causing loss of more than a thousand dollars each, in one Canadian province, in less than eleven months. The fact ought to arrest public attention, but we question if it will, we are so used to fires as to think we cannot lessen them.

#### ANTI-REBATE INDEED.

As evidence of a welcome consistency in life assurance principles, as well as expressing in a vigorous way a decent respect for proper aggressive action on the part of another company, we welcome the following incident: An agent for the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the U. S., whose name is W. J. Madden, made haste to write and print a letter in which he praised the action of Ward, the New York Life employee, who lost his position for practising and defending the rebate of premiums after his chief had ordered that practice stopped. Mr. Madden thereupon received the following letter:—

New York, October 30, 1893.

W. J. Madden, Esq.,  
Office.

Dear Sir,—In consequence of your expressed views with regard to rebating, you are hereby given thirty days' notice of termination of your contract with this society, dated February 3, 1893, without prejudice to any claims of the society against you for any moneys due or to become due.

Yours truly,

(Signed) FRANK H. BALLARD,

Supt. of Agencies, Equitable Life Soc.

#### CHEAPER BREAD.

In some Canadian cities a considerable agitation for cheaper bread has taken place recently. For, although the price of flour has shown steady decline, and was probably never lower than now, the price of bread has been maintained at a standard fixed some years ago. This agitation, while not without foundation, may be carried to an excess. Profits are so hard to obtain now-a-days, that other tradesmen who cannot get a decent profit will be savage at the bakers. But if the profits of the bakers be reduced too much, it is sure to result in the production of inferior bread. For fewer and less skilled workmen will be employed, poorer flour will be used, and the temptation to give a light weight article to the public is sure to be stronger. Further, the sanitary arrangements of the majority of Canadian bakeries, as a rule, are excellent, and stand out in marked contrast to those of bakers in some American cities. In San Francisco, for instance, much of the bread is baked in poorly ventilated underground bakeries. This, the bakers say, no one regrets more than they themselves do, but competition has forced them into these places. Of course, excessive profits are an injustice to the consumer. But an excessive credit system forms an equal injustice to the bakers. And if credit be not given during the coming winter by the bakers, to some of the people whom they are accused of robbing, these people must starve. It is, however, an injustice to the man who pays cash for his bread to make him assist in buying the bread of his neighbor who asks credit. And the Winnipeg system, in which the cash buyer receives more loaves for his dollar, might with advantage be more extensively adopted. Bakers, as a rule, are not rich; and Mr. W. W. Ogilvie, the flour merchant, says the eighty Montreal bakers whom he supplies with flour never owe him less than \$200,000.

#### FRUIT GROWERS.

We learn with interest of an important meeting of Canadian horticulturists next week. It is the annual and winter meeting of the Fruit-growers' Association of Ontario, which will be held with the Peterboro Fruit-growers' Association in the town council chamber, Peterboro, beginning at one p.m. on Tuesday, 5th of December, 1893, and continuing for two or three days. All the meetings are public, and every one interested in the orchard and garden is invited to be present. An effort will be made at this gathering to ascertain where there is an increase and where a decrease in Canadian orchards, and what changes have been made in methods of cultivation. Other practical questions will be asked, we are told, as for example, what kind of apples, etc., have proved most profitable; "what three varieties of apples should be grown for the British market: one early winter, one midwinter, and one late keeper;" how should apples be packed for foreign markets; how will apples compare with turnips at 8 cents per bushel as cattle food?

In addition to the president's annual address, papers are to be read on "Fruit Growing in Ontario in the future and how to make it pay," by Mr. A. M. Smith, St. Catharines. One on "Peterboro as a fruit growing county," by Mr. E. B. Edwards, of Peterboro. Another on "The necessity of a change in our methods of obtaining and introducing new varieties of fruit," by Mr. Thos. Beal, of Lindsay. Then Prof. Hutt, horticulturist at the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, will make an address, and Prof. Saunders, director Experimental Farms of Canada, will speak on ornamental trees and shrubs, and Prof. John Craig, horticulturist, and Prof. Shutt, chemist Central Experimental Farm, will read papers, and Mr. R. B. Whyte, of Ottawa, will hold forth on raspberry culture.

#### THE MARKET FOR RAW FURS.

It appears beyond dispute that bad prospects are in store for the fur trade. Not alone is that trade suffering in the United States (by reason, doubtless, of the financial revulsion there), but in Great Britain and Ireland, though from the weather reported from the United Kingdom in October and November, one would have inferred a brisk demand for fur garments, at least.

Messrs. Lampson & Co., the great London collectors, in a circular received a few days ago, give the following as their idea as regarding the trade prospects for shipping furs: "The fur trade has been distinctly bad in this country; fairly good in Germany and France, but, on the other hand, rather more satisfactory in Russia. The depression existing in business in the United States is a most important factor which must be taken into account. Should it continue much longer we shall seriously feel its effects at the coming sales. Not only will there be a material increase in the quantities of several articles, on account of their being no longer largely consumed in America, but we shall also miss at our sales the usual support we get from that market. Speaking generally, therefore, we consider prospects for the coming winter and spring sales by no means favorable." The Messrs. Lampson then go on to state their expectations regarding the various different lines in detail, from which we cull anticipations regarding the principal furs that Canada exports.