

advantage, as prices of land and labor now are, remake a home for his flourishing Company, and so have two substantial *standing* advertisements instead of one, for the present building would always be remembered as "the old Confederation building; now the — hotel."

I have just heard that the Annual Meeting of the Toronto Board of Fire Underwriters has been adjourned to Thursday, the 15th of February, and meanwhile, weekly meetings will not be held.

The latest matter of interest in Toronto insurance circles is the renewal and redistribution of the three year Civic Insurance. Formerly, this used to be divided up, share and share alike, amongst the stock companies; now, the Mutuals, I understand, are to be considered, and will likely receive half shares each. It is rumored there has been a little wire pulling and manipulating down at the City Hall over this matter. As the whole premium to each company will not likely exceed \$150 for the three years' term, it can be judged how hard the times are up here, when a premium of that size will take up many hours of some folks' time in the seeking.

It will be a comfort, I know, to some managers who are reducing lines, re-inspecting and re-organizing things generally, to the great worry of their agents, to know that this city has eliminated all the "iron bridges" from its Insurance schedule for 1894. Further conflagration hazard from this source need not be feared.

Yours,

ARIEL.

TORONTO, 11th Jan., 1894.

Notes and Items.

The leading London papers are urging the Imperial Government to provide a subsidy for the Canada-Australia cable project, of which the prospects are brightening.

Tax exemptions in Toronto were condemned by most of the candidates for municipal honors, and the Council will memorialize the Government to secure legislation abolishing them in that city.

The vastness of insurance interests is strikingly shown by the amount of the liabilities of the companies operating in the United States being equal to the taxable value of the real property in that country.

Two new Lloyds are entering the field at New York,—the Insurance Alliance and the Metropolitan. They are both inviting business, offering 10 per cent. to agents and brokers. The Assurance Lloyds is also likely to resume.

Rogers & Co., private bankers, Stayner, have followed the long line of precedents of such enterprises by going into liquidation. The Bank of Commerce is in charge; its interests are fully secured, and they may open a branch at this point.

A fire in a fire insurance office shows that the "fire fiend" is as audacious as destructive. The Continental's New York office had a touch of fire in its entrance hall a few days ago, caused by a cigarette stub falling amongst a quantity of rubbish behind a radiator. The floor being marble stopped the fire spreading. All of which shows,—the value of fire-proof flooring, the danger of carrying cigars and cigarettes inside buildings, and the desirability of leaving no rubbish about which can be ignited by a chance match or stub of a cigar, etc.

The Canada Life Assurance Company report the total amount of accepted new business for past year, when the books closed, at \$7,116,442.

The recent storm in Toronto played such havoc with the whole electrical service of the city as to excite serious apprehension regarding the fire alarm system. Had a fire occurred during the many hours when no cars were running, no telephones working, no life in the wires, the delay would have been most serious.

We read with pleasure the recent local census of Toronto, which shows the population to have increased by about 5,000 in past year. Let demand for stores and dwellings rise nearer the supply mark than it has done since the real estate boom collapsed, and Toronto will quickly recover from the depression caused.

A rat's nest is described by a Sydney paper as containing fifty matches, four photos and a book of songs. Whether the matches were used to look at the photos and read the songs is not stated! It is too little known that carbolic acid poured down the runs of rodents will drive them off the premises; they are dangerous tenants.

The People's Industrial Insurance Company of Connecticut is being commended for reinsuring its risks in a reliable company, the Metropolitan, as soon as it got into difficulties, a course which saved cost of liquidation by a receiver, and, as the *Standard* says, "enabled the company to retire from business most honorably."

A hard case was that of a man whose horse, while insured, fell lame, and when taken to a Veterinary college was ordered to be killed. The company informed the owner that if that were done the policy would be void! *The Observer* calls it "a mean trick," "morally indefensible," and threatens to publish the name of the company.

The Toronto Fire Brigade chief, in his report for 1893, gives the number of fires as 555, an increase of 52 over 1892. How far the empty premises increased the number of fires is not stated. The total loss is given as \$195,403, on properties which were insured for \$1,021,081. This record is one very creditable to the Toronto Brigade, as with an increase of nearly 10 per cent. in number of fires last year, the loss was less by \$25,105 than in 1892, and \$32,000 below average of past eight years.

The service cost \$162,136—a low figure for the protection afforded. The Chief reports 51 fires as incendiary, and 26 caused by mischievous boys. The "mischievous boy" is coming too much into prominence as a cause of fires.

Electric wires are blamed by Francis W. Whiting, manager of the New York Tariff Association, for the steadily increasing fire losses on this continent. He says: "Before the almost universal use of electricity, insurance companies made money, leaving out the years of the Chicago and Boston fires. The insurance business prior to the extensive use of electricity had been conducted at a profit." He points out the increase in cases of "cause unknown" and of the burning of the best risks. All this, however, is presumptive, not direct evidence, but strong enough to justify the utmost caution in taking chances of fire by electric wiring. Mr. Whiting advises the exposure of all wires, as then defects would be revealed. Clearly, the subject is a very live one, and calls for close investigation and action to lower this new risk.