

—The directors of the Royal Insurance Co'y met together in Liverpool, on the 1st of August, to mentally digest the figures of the annual report for 1883. That the undertaking was a pleasant one no one who has perused the statement of the fire branch will doubt. The net premiums received amount to £982,787, which is a gratifying increase of £38,472, or a profit of £100,000. The losses amount to 61.4 of the premiums or £603,432, a less sum than was absorbed last year. The directors have created what they call a "Conflagration Fund" and to which as a first instalment they place the sum of £200,000, being a part of the amount derived from the increased value of securities. The shareholders need not be surprised if they do not find the next report to show such large gains. The Chairman, in his address, speaks of the numerous fires that took place in the early part of this year, many of them of very serious character." He takes anything but a gloomy view of the matter, however, for we find him saying "whatever our losses may prove to be in one year, I am quite satisfied that they will be made up in subsequent years." The exhibit of the Life Department is a good one. The premiums from £403,384 worth of new assurances reached £14,027, which, added to the revenue from policies previously in force, makes a total of £252,879. About 5½ per cent. of the premiums will provide for the expenses and the commissions absorb 4.4 per cent. The total funds of this successful Company now stand at £5,245,105 or something over £26,000,000.

—The Wall Street bank was opened on Monday for the first time since its suspension. As soon as the court orders the resumption of payment, depositors will, they have been informed, receive a portion of their money. It is thought that depositors will eventually be paid in full, while shareholders likely to be partially reimbursed.

—Late dispatches from Vienna announce the failure of a large sugar refiner, R. Weinrich, with liabilities of \$4,000,000. The failure is said to be the natural outcome of the overproduction of beet sugar in Europe.

—A half yearly dividend at the rate of ten per cent. per annum is announced by the London & Canadian Loan and Agency Company.

FIRE RECORD.

ONTARIO.—Goderich, Aug. 24.—The arcade skating rink was totally destroyed by fire to-night. Loss fully covered by insurance in the North British and Mercantile.—London Tp., 22nd.—Kennedy's barn and outbuildings and contents were destroyed by fire, and 1,000 bushels of wheat, 400 of oats, 250 tons of hay, two horses and four pigs were burned. Loss \$8,000 to \$10,000, partly covered in Grange Insurance Company.—Toronto, Aug. 25.—The club chambers, a large wooden building on the island owned by George Jackson, and occupied by W. H. Cooper, was burned to the ground this morning. Loss on building and furniture about \$5,000. Fully covered by insurance.—Parkdale, 27th.—The losses by late fire here are, Todd, \$1,000, no insurance; R. Hayes, \$1,000, insured in Guardian; Edward's, \$1,500, insured; Jas. Hickey, \$2,300 insured in Western.—Gravenhurst, Aug. 26.—A fire completely destroyed McBurney & Co.'s mill and lumber yard. Loss on lumber, about \$30,000, mill and machinery \$20,000; insured about \$35,000.—Hamilton, 27th.—Mrs. Jno. Ferries' residence and contents destroyed. Loss about \$20,000; insured in L. & L. & Globe \$5,000 and \$2,000 in company unknown. Esqueving Tp., 24.—Douglas' barn on lot 4 con. 8th struck by lightning and burned with entire crop. Loss, \$3,000; insured \$8.—Peterboro', Aug. 25.—The hardware store of R. Kingan, Griffin's shoe shop and factory adjoining and Harris' pawnshop

burned. Mr. Kingan's loss covered by insurance \$1,000 in Western on building, on stock \$2,000 in London and Lancashire, \$2,000 in Royal and \$2,500 in Fire Assurance Association; Mr. Griffin, \$2,000 in the City of London on stock, but Mr. Harris' loss about \$300, no insurance.—Westminster Tp., 24th.—The barn of H. Jones, jr., lot 20, con. 5, was burned to the ground with contents. Loss, \$2,000; no insurance.—Aldborough Tp., 24th.—The barn and outbuildings of David Widmer, lot 12, 6 con., totally consumed with season's crops, machinery, wagons, etc. Loss about \$3,500; insured in London Mutual for \$1,500.—Osaca, 22nd.—Elliott's grist mill and contents burned. Loss \$10,000 not insured.

OTHER PROVINCES.—Ellshouse, N. S., 24.—The sawmill owned by T. Ellenshausen and operated by F. W. Beckman, on the St. Croix river, together with 200,000 feet of sawn lumber and a large boarding house adjoining, was totally destroyed by fire. Suspected incendiary.—Quebec, Aug. 24.—Martinus Saw Mill with contents burned. Loss heavy.—Shediac, N.B., 19th.—James Kelly and Wood Avars houses burned, the former was insured \$800.

THE CATTLE EXPORT QUESTION.

In view of arguments recently employed to secure the shipment from Canadian ports of United States cattle, an extract from the High Commissioner's report to the Dominion Government (just printed by order of the Commons) will prove interesting reading. It exemplifies the difficulty that already exists in retaining for Canada her present excellent position as a country entirely free from cattle diseases. The Commissioner says:—

There have been one or two cases in which cattle have been reported as arriving from Canada infected with disease, but on examination the rumors turned out to be without foundation, and Canada remains in the particularly fortunate position of being one of those few countries from which cattle are received freely in Great Britain, and are allowed to move about with only the same restrictions that are imposed upon English stock.

In August last three cargoes of cattle arrived from Quebec on board the steamships Oregon, Nepigon and Anger Head, and were stopped at Liverpool by the Inspector of the Privy Council, as being infected, it is stated, in the first place, with splenic fever, and subsequently it was reported that Texas fever was the disease from which they were suffering. Having learned that the Privy Council had sent an officer from London, who had corroborated the report of the Inspector at Liverpool and that the Privy Council had ordered the whole cargo of the Nepigon to be slaughtered on the spot, and knowing that Canada was within measurable distance of being scheduled, I proceeded at once to Liverpool, armed with a letter from the Secretary of the Privy Council, to Professor Duquid, the veterinary surgeon who had been sent from London, and who was there instructed to submit all the evidence for my inspection and furnish me with every facility to examine the whole case.

Under my direction, half a dozen animals were slaughtered in my presence, and I succeeded in demonstrating to Professor Duquid that they were entirely free from disease.

The cargoes of the two other steamers were similarly inspected and with the same result.

I requested Professor Duquid to send an amended report at once to London, and having returned to London that night, I met the Secretary of the Privy Council early on the following morning, and after a full discussion of the whole question with him and several veterinary authorities of the Privy Council, an order was sent, cancelling the previous one and freeing all three cargoes from any restrictions.

Mr. Peel, the Secretary of the Privy Council, thanked me warmly for the personal attention I had given to this important matter, and expressed himself as much gratified by the result. A case was also reported during the last year in which some cattle from Canada were stated to be infected with the foot-and-mouth disease at Bristol.

Enquiries, however, into this matter, elicited the fact that the animals were passed as being in good order at Liverpool, and that they were deposited, on arrival in Bristol, in a yard in which some beasts from Ireland had previously been placed, and it was in this way that the Canadian cattle caught the infection.

It has been reported that Canadian sheep affected by scab, have been found in some cargoes that have arrived. I believe, however, it is the fact that these were rejected and refused to be passed by the veterinary inspector at the port of Montreal. But it happened that there was no impediment to their being imported to the United States. They were, therefore, sent to Portland, and from that port shipped as Canadian sheep; the port of exportation being, however, from the United States.

Considering the exceptional position in which Canada is placed at the present time, with regard to the exportation of animals of all kinds to Great Britain, it becomes a matter of national importance that every care should be taken both by the farmers and shippers, to prevent any animals being shipped which may be infected with disease or which may be, to any extent, unhealthy, whether the ailment from which they are suffering is infectious or not. It is gratifying to all the friends of Canada to see that such an important industry is growing, and when it is stated that the imports of live cattle into Great Britain, from all countries, average 350,000 per annum, in addition to about 1,000,000 sheep and 16,000 swine, it will be seen what an admirable and growing market is available for all kinds of stock that may be raised in Canada. The value of the imports of live cattle, in 1882, was over £9,000,000, in addition to dead meat of the value of £6,000,000, and other agricultural products valued at £12,000,000.

As an inducement to the Government to consent to allow Wyoming and Montana cattle to be shipped from Canadian ports it is represented that a million of cattle a year will be transported over Canadian railways and shipped from Montreal. The statement is preposterous, the figures given by the High Commissioner showing that the import of cattle into England and Scotland from all countries is only 350,000 per annum. But even if the railways of Canada were to carry a million of United States cattle—which animals, being shipped from Canadian ports would be classed in England as Canadian cattle, and would thus receive the benefit of the exceptional health position which Canada enjoys—this would be poor compensation to Canada should this export of foreign cattle eventually cause her to lose her exceptional advantages. One result would certainly follow. All western and southern United States cattle would soon become Wyoming or Montana cattle, carrying disease with them. It is as much as we can do in Canada to keep our own herds free from disease; we certainly cannot undertake to regulate all the United States as well. We know where we stand now; but if Mr. Frewer's views were to prevail we might wake up some morning to find that our railways had lost the promised traffic and that Canada had been placed on the list of "scheduled" countries. In fact, we might purchase this railway traffic at far too dear a price.—*Montreal Herald*.

THE DARKNESS BEFORE DAWN.

The conditions of the times is not promotive of cheerfulness. The process of liquidation involves a continual diminution of the estimated values of property, so that everybody feels comparatively poor, and a good many people are apprehensive of becoming positively so. It seems an interminable while since things first began to settle down to hard bottom. The business inflation of 1879 didn't fairly break out till towards the end of the year; it reached its height and began to subside within six months thereafter, and it ended abruptly on the day of the great national tragedy of July 2, 1881. The interval of more than three years has been marked by a dull, wearisome decadence, relieved by occasional spurts of artificial activity, brief of duration and fruitless of benefits. During the greater part of the time we have been on the down grade. Commodities of all kinds have been falling in price and increasing in quantity. There is scarcely a great staple—we cannot for the moment call to mind a single one, except cotton—that has not gone down very much below its average value, and some things are cheaper than they ever were before. The mechanical industries of the country are unprofitable, and a considerable number of able-bodied men have been thrown out of employment. These are the discouraging features of the situation, and it is not at all surprising that they have impaired confidence to such a degree that a great many business men have lost heart and hope. The spirit of enterprise is com-