THE Agricultural of Watertown, New York, has added $104,500 to the base of its solid pyramid.

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MR. J. D. WELLS, general manager of the Mutual Reserve Association, for the Dominion, took first prize at the annual general meeting of the association, lately held at New York, for the largest business done at any of the general agencies. J. D. did it before, and expects to do it again. He is known as the prize agent of the association.

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THE appropriation of $10,000 by Montreal for improvements of its fire department, was not made a day too soon, judging of that department by the reports made of it by the local underwriters. The condition of the department, it is presumable, must have been known to the underwriters in fixing their rates, or it was not. The inference is clear.

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THE Toronto agency of the Gore District Mutual Fire Insurance Company, made vacant by the death of Mr. Geo. Graham, late agent of the company, has been given to Mr. D. M. Harman. The "old Gore" was established in 1839, head office Galt, Ont., R. S. Strong, manager. Though not yet very familiar to the business community of Toronto, the Gore is a solid, prosperous institution, and the security it offers is equal to the best. None better.

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WE refrain from comment on the case of A. E. Ridley, insurance agent at St. Thomas, Ont., who is charged with forgery. Mr. Ridley insists that he is innocent and, as the case is now before the courts, and it having recently taken a new turn—the paper said to have been forged has disappeared—we prefer to say nothing more but await developments. We have known Mr. Ridley for a number of years and always regarded him as an active, intelligent insurance agent and safe business man.

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THE secretary of the Huron and Middlesex Fire, London, Ont., writes :

> Our business for 1887 has been fairly good, a large increase of undertakings. We have increased our premium note capital in round numbers $20,000. Our losses have been heavier than last year by about $2,000. The outlook for 1888 is very good. We have for January nearly trebled our undertakings and more than doubled our cash income.

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REFERRING to the annual report of the Canadian Mutual Aid Association, which appears in this issue of THE BUDGET, we note that the business done last year was larger and every way more satisfactory than was that for the year before. It shows marked progress which, most likely, is owing to extra efforts made for new business, "new blood" being at once the source of life and the stay of the assessment system. The report is ample in details, and should be as satisfactory to the members, as it must be gratifying to the management to be able to make such a presentation.

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THE automatic sprinkler does not always sprinkle automatically. This fact is too often lost sight of by fire insurance companies. But perfect trust is reposed in the machine by both policy-holder and company, and one demands and the other grants large concessions because of the sprinkler. But even when the sprinkler sprinkles automatically it is only after it has been carefully kept in order, and that can't be done by trusting to its automatic properties. The fact is that a paying business under honest management is better protected than one with an automatic sprinkler, and this should be remembered in rating risks.

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WE see it stated in some of our British exchanges that notice has been given that the London city corporation will apply to parliament at coming session for leave to bring in a bill giving power to the city coroner and his deputy to hold inquiries into the cause of fires in the city. The coroner is to have the same rights in regard to these inquests as he has in regard to inquests on dead bodies. Other cities and towns will follow the lead of the metropolis in this matter. It would be better to pass a general Act for the purpose, so that fires in all parts of the United Kingdom and Ireland could be officially inquired into.

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CALLERS at this office during the month have been: J. B. Cook, inspector Mercantile Fire, Waterloo, Ont.; A. L. Rundle, special agent Federal Life, Oshawa, Ont.; George R. Morrison, manager Eastern Ontario, Manufacturers' Life, Peterborough; Major E. A. Baynes, manager, P. Q, Manufacturers' Life, Montreal; H. J. Farmer, general insurance agent, Montreal; J. B. Lawlor, inspector London and Lancashire Life; B. P. Richardson, inspector North-West, London and Lancashire Life, Winnipeg; T. C. Livingstone, general agent North-West, Mutual Life, N. Y., Winnipeg; Jas. H. Scott, agency manager English and Scottish Law Life, London, England; Chas. E. Goad, C. E., Montreal.

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WE learn from the *Packet* that there is a disturbed state of affairs at Orillia between the policy-holders and the insurance companies in regard to permits allowing the use of electric lights. J. P. Secord, a prominent insurance agent, has been active in procuring the permits, but does not appear to have succeeded in reconciling the "combatants" as to which of them is to pay for the inspection of the electrical fixtures. This is the bone of contention. Policy-holders everywhere should know that whatever the insurance companies pay or allow, is paid or made "good" to them by the insured, for otherwise the companies would have to pay out of their own pocket—their capital,—which they do not like to do, nor can they afford to do it. So that all charges, ordinary and extraordinary, must be paid by the policy-holders. If not paid, it means loss to the company, and that again means weakened security to the insured. Policy-holders will please note.

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IN reply to a letter from Mr. W. Jones, secretary of the Lion Provident Live Stock and Life Association of Toronto, complaining of an item in the December issue of THE BUDGET as misleading and very libellous, or words to that effect, we beg to say that said association, from its title, appears to be a provident association, organized under the Benevolent Societies Act, and appears as a matter of fact to have been so incorporated. The terms of the association's printed circulars, etc., however, suggest that the association does the business of a licensed insurance company, that is, life insurance, which would of course be incompatible with the intention of the Benevolent Societies Act. As an insurance journal, speaking to insurance agents, THE BUDGET informed them in effect that the association is simply a provident association and that they could not truthfully represent it to the public as an in-