

A good year's business is shown by the figures of the North British and Mercantile Insurance Company, which held its annual meeting in London on the 14th ult. The net fire premiums of the past year amounted to £1,271,031, the net fire losses to £710,801, which is only 56 per cent., a low rate. We note also that the company's new life premiums are £41,383, assuring £1,013,054 in 1,217 policies. The sum of £316,746, in which is included the profit on the Scottish Provincial Assurance Company's business for last year, stood at the credit of Profit and Loss Account. After providing for the dividend and bonus payable in 1890, the paid-up capital, fire reserves, and undivided profit will amount to £2,869,647, or about fourteen million three hundred thousand dollars. The directors recommend a dividend for the year of £1 per share and a bonus of £1 per share.

The Chicago Tribune gives the following partial list of names and States of defunct fire insurance companies doing business in that city and vicinity, namely: Seattle, Washington; Pierre, South Dakota; Interstate Mutual, Elkhart, Ind.; American Mutual and Continental Mutual, Michigan City, Ind.; Kanawha, Grafton, W. Va.; Arlington and Citizens', Memphis, Tenn.; Kansas Home, Topeka, Kansas; and the American Banking Insurance Company, of Lynchburg, W. Va. Canadians who insure in the underground companies would do well to paste this savory list in their hats, and avoid these and all such.

MONTREAL CLEARING-HOUSE.

Clearings and Balances for the week ending 1st May, 1890, were as under:

	Clearings.	Balances.
April 25.....	\$1,329,450	\$ 215,817
" 26.....	1,418,072	172,915
" 28.....	843,392	170,690
" 29.....	1,632,076	289,785
" 30.....	1,673,076	234,573
May 1.....	1,304,061	224,927
Total	\$8,200,127	\$1,308,707
Last week.....	\$ 8,200,162	\$1,207,012
Cor. week last year	8,723,667	1,280,036

—The annual meeting of the Cornwall Board of Trade was held on Friday evening, the 25th ultimo. The principal business of the occasion was the election of officers, which resulted in the choice of the following gentlemen to the offices named for the ensuing year:—President, John McIntyre; vice-president, J. G. Kirkpatrick; secretary, C. W. Brownell. Council, the officers above-named, together with Messrs. A. Denny, D. Monroe, A. M. Hodge, G. E. Armstrong, Hill Campbell, J. F. Abbott, Dr. Alguire, E. H. Brown, W. H. Dunkin, D. A. Flack, A. F. Mulhorn, J. G. Watson. Board of Arbitration, G. E. Campbell, Dr. Alguire, Wm. Hodge, A. Denny, D. Monroe, James Strickland, J. P. Watson, E. H. Brown, A. F. Millikin, R. Mackenzie, F. W. Armstrong, and A. T. Porteous.

—On Tuesday evening last was held a meeting of the newly-organized Board of Trade in Barrie. The certificate from the Government authorizing the establishment of the board was read. The election of officers resulted as follows:—President, Mr. N. Dymont; 1st vice-president, Mr. J. J. Brown; 2nd vice-president, Mr. Jas. Vair. Mr. Fred. Marr had been already chosen secretary-treasurer. The following gentlemen were elected as the Council: Messrs. H. H. Morris, Martin Burton, F. A. Lett, Geo. Reedy, W. H. Free-

man, R. A. Douglas, C. A. Perkins, D. McBrady, H. B. Myers, R. T. Fraser, R. Story, J. Woods. At another meeting, to be held next week, by-laws for governance of the board will be presented.

—It is a fair indication that trade is not dead, at least, as one of the Guild put it in his strong way, "not so very blank dead but what some of our C. T. A. elixir will help it," to find, as a wholesale man did last week, fifteen commercial travellers together at Collingwood on one boat bound for Parry Sound and other Georgian Bay ports. The boys find it hard to get orders, but this only whets their ingenuity; and they send in some to decide on filling which mightily bothers their principals. Still we are glad to note that, as a rule, the country trade is buying very sparingly.

—We learn from Halifax that Mr. M. P. Black, after being thirty-two years a director in the Union Bank of that city, has retired on account of failing health, and Mr. William Robertson has been appointed in his stead.

Correspondence.

A WORD FOR WOMEN CLERKS.

Editor MONETARY TIMES.

SIR,—I have been reading some articles in your journal on the subject of dyspepsia and its effect on business. It seems to me you have gone into the matter from a man's point of view, and all your illustrations refer to its effect on *man*. I wonder whether it ever struck you, or your writer, to consider how women who work at their businesses, I mean the women, whether young or middle-aged, who form nowadays—as I hope you will admit they do—no unimportant part of the machinery of commerce (I hope this is a proper phrase to use) are affected by it.

It is not my intention to speak of the large army of female workers in our factories, not having any particular knowledge of how they are situated as to their surroundings or what their grievances are. Anyhow they are in some sort of way protected, are they not, by the Factory Act? But what I would like to suggest is that female clerks, female book-keepers, female stenographers and typewriters do suffer equally with men in similar positions. They are shut up pretty closely, and have to work long hours, and are not always treated with the consideration that they are supposed to get from the lords of creation, and so their health suffers.

I am not speaking for myself in this matter, I cannot call myself overworked; my health is good enough and my digestion all right and I have no nervous troubles. But I know quite a few girls and some widows who seem to be losing their health and spirits in offices, and I think it is because these places are kept too hot or else are draughty or badly ventilated and have not proper sanitary arrangements. There is one girl I know, who goes to office at nine and is kept busy right along answering correspondence or taking down letters and typewriting them and doing anything else that the bosses want done until six and sometimes half-past, and most of the time she does not get out to lunch but has to take her sandwich and a drink of water into the office. Now she is getting sallow and stooped and I know she is neither so well nor so strong as she was a year or two ago, and I think it is because she is worked so hard and such long hours. Dyspepsia comes, so your paper says, from over-eating or else from irregular eating and from a want of air and exercise. Now I don't think we over-eat as a rule, but we must confess to irregularity in our eating, *how can we help it* when we are in such a fix as I told you about? We must get our meals when we can and our exercise when we get away from the office and are tired out.

Then some of the office girls have to work in a disgrace to any decent firm. I have seen, and not in factories either, damp walls, rotten woodwork, rat-holed floors in an office; and the smells that came from beneath

were horribly unhealthy—plain sewer gas, I think. Now we have a right, everybody has a right, to be protected from these things.

Yours sincerely,
SYLVIA.

London, 24th April, 1890.

AN ONTARIO TRIP.

Editor MONETARY TIMES:

SIR,—In most parts of Ontario I found business on the dull side this spring, but trade in Muskoka and the towns on Lake Superior is, all things considered, very satisfactory. More snow has fallen in Northern Ontario, and a good deal more timber has found its way to the water-courses, the usual quantity of lumber is thus available for the market.

In Muskoka, now that the forests are being cleared, more land is cultivated, and a good deal of excellent soil is now under cultivation. The land is broken and rocky in places, but still large crops of oats, rye, and potatoes have been grown this last year. Farmers with some capital would find this district well adapted for stock-raising, and especially for dairy farming.

In the neighborhood of Huntsville, Burk's Falls, and Sundridge the scenery is highly picturesque, and the water privileges all that could be desired. Potatoes of good quality in carlots can be bought in the neighborhood of Huntsville for about forty cents per bag.

Gravenhurst has risen from its ashes and the buildings erected are mostly of brick. The town has a substantial look, and the beautiful lakes of this district add to its attractions. The trim boats of the Muskoka and Georgian Bay Navigation Co. will be ready for running on them in about two weeks. Bracebridge too is growing, and quite a number of new buildings have gone up since my last visit there.

The pretty town of Orillia is making steady progress. Many private dwellings have been erected, besides a few business establishments. Mr. J. J. Hatley, one of the oldest business men there, has combined his businesses of meat, game, fish, fruit, &c., in one store, and has now one of the finest business houses in the town.

North Bay has the C.P.R. repairing shops, giving employment to some 80 hands, besides having in its rear large tracts of timber and undeveloped mineral lands. This place has a bright future.

Mattawa is a very pretty place, and some day is likely to be a prominent summer resort. It is the centre of a large timber district, and is near the headwaters of the Ottawa River. There is some talk of a railroad connecting with the G.T.R. at Haliburton. If completed this will add considerably to the trade of the town. I am told there are some very good farming lands about fifteen miles away. The Hudson Bay Co. has one of its oldest trading posts here, and Mr. Colin Rankin, who has charge, is one of the oldest servants of the company, brimfull of experiences of the early settlement of these parts.

All the old subscribers along the route expressed themselves as highly satisfied with THE MONETARY TIMES, and said they got in its pages good value every time for their money.

THOMAS GORDON OLIVER.

Mattawa, 22nd April, 1890.

PRACTICAL CHARITY.

Respecting the influence of bankers and banking in practical charity and philanthropy, the following, which we find in the Chicago Bankers' Monthly, is a portion of a paper read before an assemblage of American bankers by Mr. James T. Howenstein, of Washington, secretary of the Bankers' Convention of 1875 in Saratoga:

"Charity is always claiming the attention of all provident men, and has a support from the banking fraternity unlike that of any other profession or business. I am not disposed to enter into any discussion of poverty, nor an examination of the necessity which is supposed to entail pauperism on society. It is the boast of our country that the civil and political rights of every human being are secured; that impartial law watches alike over rich and poor. But man has other and more important rights, and this is especially true of the poor.

"We read and hear much about the riches of people; about the amassing of property by the few at the expense of the many; the calls