

property,, which can doubtless be administered with very beneficial results to both companies. Such an arrangement between the two companies will not in any way involve the suppression of the independence of the Orient.

On the contrary, the Orient will continue working as heretofore, as a separate company, with its head office at Hartford, and this fact will be fully appreciated by the agents and representatives throughout the country. The policyholders will also have the satisfaction of knowing that, by this alliance, they will be protected not only by the assets of the Orient, which, at December 31st last, amounted to \$2,441,158, but also by the assets of the London & Lancashire Fire Insurance Company, which, irrespective of uncalled capital, amount to \$7,344,540. By the company's operations of 1899 all over the world, the reserves of the London & Lancashire were increased to the extent of \$394,245, its profit having been larger than that of any other company for that year. It is very clear that the London & Lancashire has made a master stroke in securing by this deal a prize which has few if any equals among the American acquirements of British companies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

We have to thank Superintendent Van Cleave for the Illinois Fire Reports for 1900.

The Wisconsin Report for 1900 has also been received.

Correspondence.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for views expressed by correspondents.

LONDON LETTER.

FINANCIAL.

7th June, 1900.

So the Union Jack floats again over Pretoria after an interval of about thirty years. The people were crazy with delight the night before last, but the afternoon stock markets absolutely refused to be enlivened. Whether it was that the Boxer trouble in China neutralizes the good effect of the occupation of the Transvaal capital, or that the probability of the entry had been for a long time discounted we can hardly tell. More likely a little of both entered into it. When the broker and dealer left Throgmorton Street, he, like the average man, behaved in a deliriously happy way, rode on the top of hansoms playing a cornet, waved flags, tickled women with peacock feathers, blew horns, swung bird scarers, let off fireworks, and sang and shouted for all he was worth. On 'Change, however, he had again to bemoan the absence of public buying, and market operations were dull as ditch-water.

Prophecy has completely gone astray over the Johannesburg gold mines. The war, in the first place really relieved a depressing tension in the place of producing a break in quotations. Even after the darkest days of December, prices stood better than before the delivery of the Ultimatum. Afterwards there was a continuous upward movement, culminating with a little temporary rush up upon the first news being received about the eminently pleasant position

of affairs at Johannesburg, with the enemy's political centre seized, and the man in the street hurrahing for the end of the war, prices look like receding. The public is a strange animal.

Company promoters are at last seeing a chance to make a move with the numerous projects which have been kept back for a more cheerful financial outlook. The doubtful duration of the war, tight money and general adverse conditions are disappearing troubles now. During May, 36 issues were made with a total capitalization of \$40,544,220 against 31 in April, of a value of \$38,067,165. An interesting May issue was a local loan issued by the Douglas (Isle of Man) Corporation—a fixed price of issue (90 per cent.) being adopted instead of the customary issue by tender.

Westralia is a big colony with a little population, and, notwithstanding this disproportionateness, would get along all right were it not for the Coolgardie, Kalgurli and Boulden gold producing centres. Rich though they have proved, they were not rich enough for certain unscrupulous British companies, and public and market confidence have been over and over again rudely shaken by damning disclosures. From the Hit and Miss mine frauds to the recent Associated troubles, the series has been continuous.

Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacifics are again in excellent odor on 'Change. Last week's Trunk traffic increase, which was estimated here to read about \$5,000 or \$10,000 ran up to \$28,000, and the excitement of it all probably accounts for the mistake of that broker who put it on his list as "Grand Trunk increase."

Once having set their hands to the plough, the Leyland directors do not intend to turn back. Their first gigantic proposition having been an utter frost, they are going for something quieter. The Main and Pacific Steamship Company is to be absorbed, and the capital of the new fusion will be \$14,000,000. This is a solid and sanguine move.

The Russian loan about which we hear so much is to be a big thing, a hundred million dollars, probably. It will be issued largely for railways and military equipment. Ahem! The Russo-French entente is a grand thing. Russia is ready, and Gaul is free with money.

INSURANCE.

That most interesting legal case about the insurance of commandeered gold has been brought to a conclusion. Justice Mathew decides that the underwriters are liable for the \$2,500,000 in gold belonging to a couple of Raand gold companies and seized by the Boers when in transit from Johannesburg to Cape Town. The underwriters, of course, stand to be indemnified by the British Government at the end of the war.

It was a rather plausible argument which the insurers used in trying to ward off a judgment against themselves. As the commandeered gold was used to levy war against Her Majesty, the claims for satisfaction were contrary to public policy. It did not work, however, although it may upon appeal.

Amongst the business which is being transacted at