

The Chronicle

Insurance & Finance.

R. WILSON SMITH,
Proprietor.

ESTABLISHED JANUARY, 1881
PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY

JOHN T. P. KNIGHT,
Editor.

VOL. XIX. No. 3.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JANUARY 20, 1899.

SINGLE COPY - - .10
ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION - \$2.00

A British Surplus.

Despite the extraordinary outlay for the Navy, there is abundant evidence that the revenue of Great Britain for the financial year will so greatly exceed the estimate as to admit of the declaration of another surplus. The latest London papers announce that, although three months ago the Budget outlook was far from bright, and a serious deficiency seemed certain, the cessation of the labour disputes in Wales, and exceptionally productive duties, has resulted in an increase of revenue for the December quarter over the corresponding quarter of the previous year of \$3,620,000.

The total revenue for the nine months amounts to the enormous sum of \$391,702,340, as against \$386,830,600 for the same period of 1897.

The day for Macaulay's New Zealander to indulge in moralizing on the downfall of the "beautiful isle of the sea" is yet very much "hull down" in the distance.

A December Fire.

The damage to the Home Life building in New York by the great fire of December 4th has been appraised, and the amount to be paid by the interested companies is stated at \$199,325.82. The whole amount of insurance placed was as follows:—

Royal	\$80,000
Continental	70,000
Sun Fire	50,000
Phenix of Brooklyn	40,000
North British	40,000
Liverpool and London and Globe	40,000
German-American	30,000

An exchange draws attention to the prevailing deplorable competition in rates by remarking:—

"When it is considered that the insurance was written for five years for a gross premium of \$350, the problem of how to do such a business with profit is one which we guess no fellow can find out."

Dominion Finances.

Highly interesting are the public accounts for the year ended 30th June last. The receipts on account of consolidated fund were \$40,555,238, and expenditure \$38,832,525, being a surplus of \$1,722,712. The net debt at the date named was \$263,956,398. Probably the most interesting feature of this blue book is the reference by Mr. Courtney, deputy minister of finance, to the large amount of the public debt maturing between 1903 and 1910. The book also contains a tabulated statement of the total expenditure on account of consolidated fund, and capital account from Confederation to the date above named, in connection with which Mr. Courtney says:—

"Latterly there has been from time to time discussions in the public press on the subject of surpluses on consolidated fund account, and capital expenditure, and in consequence thereof I have thought it well to append a new statement showing the total amount received and expended year by year since Confederation. It will be found on examining this statement that during that period the total expenditure over-ran the receipts by \$188,227,757, and that in only two years has there been an absolute decrease in the net debt. This excess was rendered necessary by the large undertakings in connection with railways, canals, and other public works chargeable to capital." The two years in which there was a decrease are 1871 and 1882.

The expansion in the circulation of Dominion Government notes, noticed by the Deputy Minister in his report of 1897, continues, having increased 18 per cent. during a period covering only six years.

The amount at the credit of depositors in the Government and Post Office Savings Banks on the 30th June, reached \$50,111,113, an increase of \$1,176,143.

The decline in the rate of interest paid on the gross debt of the Dominion is also a cause for comment. The average rate for the year under review was 3.10 per cent. against 3.20 for the preceding twelve months.