TORONTO AND NIPISSING RAILWAY DEBENTURES.

Twelve thousand dollars of these debentures have been placed at par. Bids were received to double the entire amount offered, but being under par, were not accepted. It is said that the unsold portion will be thrown upon the market in a few days.

THE Great Western Railway Company has given notice of its intention to apply to the Dominion Legislature for power to change the gauge of its line. The recent agreement between the Michigan Central and the Detroit and Milwaukee railways on the one hand, and the Great Western on the other, which now awaits the sanction of the English Board of the latter to render it final, is intended to enable the combination to compete more satisfactorily for the traffic between Chicago and New York, with the Michigan Southern and Lake Shore, the Pittsburgh and Fort Wayne, and the Pennsylvania Central railways. The Glencoe line will, it is intended, shorten the distance by twenty miles, and save more than fifty miles in grades, between Detroit and Buffalo. The proposed straightening of the Michigan Central between Ypslanti and Niles will save thirty miles between Detroit and Chicago.

WHEN the Insurance Act was under discussion in the Dominion Parliament, it was suggested that insurance companies were subjects for local, not federal, legislation. By the British North America Act, 1867, the Dominion Parliament has exclusive jurisdiction as regards "the regulation of trade and commerce," and the Local Legislature have exclusive jurisdiction as to "the incorporation of companies with provincial objects." It was decided by the Speaker that insurance companies were not trading companies in the broad sense of the term "trade," which meant the importation and exportation of goods. It has been recently decided, by the Supreme Court of the United States, that insurance is not commerce, and therefore that no power resides either in itself or in Congress to interfere with whatever restrictions and impositions the Legislatures of the several States may place upon it.

INTERNATIONAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.—The public are no doubt generally aware, from repeated statements of the fact in this Journal, that the risks of the above company have been transferred to another English company, the Prudential. Quite recently we were made aware, from a reliable source, that the Prudential has been negotiating with the Canada Life for the transfer of the International's Canadian risks to the Canada—a most desirable arrangement for the policy-holders of the International, if it could be carried into effect. Our informant, however, states that owing to the very safe terms demanded by the Canada Life, the prospect of the negotiations reaching a successful issue are not good—indeed, by this time, the matter may have been finally dropped.

HON. WM. BARNES.—This gentleman, who has held the office of Insurance Commissioner of the State of New York for ten years, has vacated his position, the office being required for political purposes. The insurance journals very generally deprecate the change, and, we think, with good reason. Mr. Barnes has displayed great zeal in the discharge of his duties, and has undoubtedly brought his department up to a very high state of efficiency. His integrity is not impeached; he has been found fault with, but no one in his position would escape blame. So far as we can see at this distance, it is exceedingly doubtful if an equally deserving incumbent of his place will be found.

—It is said that one of the Companies interested in the McInnes' fire in Hamilton, has settled on the basis of $47,000 loss.

TRADE REVIEW.

It now seems to be settled that we shall have a low range of prices for produce during the remainder of the season. Farmers have been loth to bring themselves to believe it, and consequently have been holding back their grain, but the conviction has forced itself upon them, apparently, at last, and we hear there is a general disposition to deliver at present prices, and make the best of them. Farmers, speaking generally, are in a very different position from what they were some time ago. The last five years they have witnessed comparative plenty and abundance, and along with this, a brisk demand for everything they had to sell at prices at times almost unexampled. There must have been a vast increase of available wealth amongst them, and perhaps it is not indicated by anything more than by the steady and continuous increase of bank deposits. It is a most remarkable thing to reflect upon that these deposits have nearly doubled during the last six years—an astounding increase, and a fact calculated to awaken most gratifying feelings of confidence in the present position of Canada and hope for its future. How much of this increase has been amongst the farming class, how much may be from public monies—and we know there are large sums on deposit from this source—how much from corporations of various kinds, land companies, building societies, insurance companies and the like, and how much from the mercantile classes, wholesale and retail, it is of course impossible to say. But we have a strong suspicion that at any rate, a very large increase has been in the province of Ontario, and, if so, that the farming class can be credited with a considerable share of it. They have felt themselves, therefore, able to hold their wheat (for barley is a grain that must be shipped in the fall, if only to make room for other things), and it is a fact that there are thousands of bushels of wheat held at this moment of the crop of 1868, for which prices have been refused of over a dollar and a half. Of course, everybody says: "serve them right," and a farmer, perhaps when he has had the lesson once, will not need to have it repeated. But they do not relish any price under a dollar, there can be no doubt of that; and though if the quantity is only sufficient, a price consequently, under the average, may yield as much of a return as a price above it; yet it is hard to overcome the reluctance to sell at the low price. Circumstances, however, appear to have brought about the conviction that it is best to sell, and millers have now the opportunity, generally, of buying in a stock at prices which they imagine can scarcely result in loss, and may possibly give them a chance of good profit. At the same time, in the grain trade, it is proverbially hard to say *when* prices *have* touched the lowest point, and it is well known that some of the heaviest losses made, have been when prices were down to what appeared an absolutely safe point. We cannot, therefore, say that it is safe to lay in stocks at even these prices. There is only one way of managing the grain trade to a profit, and that is to avoid speculation entirely. Buy and sell, and buy again, and go on selling and buying as rapidly as possible, turning over at a small profit each time. This is the principle that should be acted upon, and the result will be a very respectable profit on the years' business. But it is such a temptation to try and escape all this work and trouble, and to attempt to secure the profit that naturally belongs to a dozen operations at one stroke. But it cannot be done; the trade is in large bulks, and it is the prime necessary of life. It admits of rapid turning over, and is generally done for cash. Of all known lines of business, this is the one where the rule of small profits and quick returns is the most natural and inevitable. Bread must be eaten every day, and this being so, there is an absolutely certain and steady demand for the article. It is a trade therefore which, if a man enters on, he can be sure of sales. It is always possible to sell at some prices, and the price, unlike that of many other articles, is regulated by the grinding down process of daily competition in open market. It is impossible therefore to take large profits out of such a business, except in special circumstances, and the man who engages in it, and seeks to leap over the trouble of operations many times repeated, and take all the profits of them at once, folding his arms and taking his ease, until the chance comes round again, will find that he has got all the world to fight against. It may seem a hard business to get no more than one or two per cent. profit, but the universal experience of the trade is that on large operations, that is about all that can be expected. And if a man makes one or two per cent., and turns over his capital twenty or thirty times a year, he will not do so badly after all.

Prices are certainly low. Good No. 1 flour has been sold in Toronto at $3.50, and excellent midge-proof wheat bought at stations a few miles off at