

ONE BILLION DOLLARS.

The New York Life Insurance company on May 23rd advertised that it had more than \$1,000,000,000 actually in force at the close of business on that day, and that consequently it was the largest life insurance company in the world.

On May 22nd, telegraphic despatches were sent to 173 papers throughout the country on behalf of the Mutual Life, announcing that that company had exceeded the \$1,000,000,000 mark, thus effectually blocking any legislation looking toward restricting any one company to that amount of business.

An executive officer of the Equitable says that on May 23rd that company had \$1,001,000,000 of insurance in force, but that the society was withholding its figures for its semi-annual report to be issued in July next, in commemoration of its fortieth anniversary.

According to the Connecticut insurance department's report of the business in force, December 31st, 1898, after deducting the amounts "not taken," the net figures of the three companies were as follows:

Mutual Life	\$956,925,442
Equitable Life	944,768,893
New York Life	936,235,920

To reach the billion dollar mark, it has been necessary for the three companies to increase their actually paid-for insurance in force by more than \$43,000,000, \$55,000,000 and \$63,000,000, respectively.—Insurance Press.

THE "BELLONA'S" FRUIT CARGO SOLD.

The cargo of the steamship "Bellona," consisting of oranges and lemons, from the Mediterranean, was sold at the Montreal Fruit Auction Company's warehouse on Friday afternoon, Potter & Morin, auctioneers. The quality of the fruit was not such as to call out a great deal of enthusiasm. The attendance was much smaller than at the former sales, out-of-town merchants having bought most of their stocks already.

The sale lasted from 1.30 until 6.30 p.m. Lemons were weaker, as there were very few lines of sound fancy fruit. Prices ranged from 50 cents to \$1 for fair, \$1.50 to \$1.75 for choice, and \$2.10 to \$3.05 for fancy, the extreme price for Sorrento fruit, while Maori's ranged from \$1.40 to \$3.85. Sorrento oranges worked between \$1 and \$2.85 for boxes, and \$1 to \$1.75 for half boxes, with Messinas, in boxes, \$1 to \$2.—Montreal Star.

A NOTICE.

As the announcement has been made that the Government of British Columbia purpose forcing the Amendment to the Metalliferous Mines Inspection Act, making eight hours a working day for those employed underground in metalliferous mines; Section 13.—"No person shall be employed underground in any metalliferous mine for more than eight hours in every twenty-four hours," the undersigned as representing one of the two parties mainly affected, consider it advisable to make public their views on the situation created by this uncalled-for legislation, and to indicate what their line of action must inevitably be.

While the undersigned are determined to respect and adhere to the laws of the province, it may be pointed out that this law is far-reaching in the injuries it must inflict upon the mining interests of the province, and on the amount of wages earned by the men.

It means reducing the hours of labor in the mines from 20 hours a day to 16

hours, as many of the mines are so circumstanced that three shifts cannot be worked to advantage. This means a reduction of 20 per cent. in the amount of the production of many mines, and a reduction of 20 per cent. in the development work being carried on in mines preparing for production, and a reduction in the supplies used in the mines.

The most amicable relations existed, and still exist, between the employers and employed at the mines. The men were earning good wages, equal to any being paid in camps in the United States, and higher than those paid in many, and they were rendering good services for these wages.

If any discontent was rife at the existing state of affairs it was not generally known. It is, therefore, deeply to be regretted that the Legislature has seen fit to disturb the existing harmony, to interfere with the growing prosperity of the mining districts, to reduce the wage-earning power of the men employed, and to interfere with the free right of contract hitherto enjoyed.

As to the future, after the 1st of June next, at the mines represented by the undersigned, the standard rate of wages that will be paid to skilled miners for an eight hour working day will be three dollars (\$3), and other labor will necessarily be also paid for according to the time worked.

The Hall Mines, Limited.

The London & British Columbia Gold-fields, Limited.

The Athabasca Gold Mine, Limited.

The Ymir Gold Mines, Limited.

The Duncan Mines, Limited.

The London Hill Development & Mining Company.

The Exchequer Gold Mining Company.

The Dundee Gold Mining Company.

Mellie Gibson Mining Company.

Yellowstone Mining Company.

Nelson, B.C., May 16th, 1899.

—Nelson Miner.

THE COMING WHEAT CROP.

The Agricultural Bureau at Washington has just given out its estimate of the world's wheat crop (in bushels), for 1898, and we give the figures as a matter of record:

	1898.	1897.
United States	675,149,000	530,149,000
Other North		
America	83,154,000	69,602,000
South America	72,000,000	46,100,000
Europe	1,548,881,000	1,152,053,000
Asia	421,321,000	364,989,000
Africa	44,439,000	36,200,000
Australasia	34,980,000	27,652,000

Total 2,879,924,000 2,226,745,000

As compared with 2,488,349,000 bushels in 1896, 2,562,518,000 bushels in 1895, 2,660,557,000 in 1894, 2,559,174,000 in 1893, and 2,481,805,000 in 1892. The 1898 harvest was the largest of record, and not the United States alone, but most other countries shared in the increase. If these figures are anywise correct, it must be that the 1898 crop has sufficed to restore the world's wheat reserves, which were drawn upon so largely during the preceding two years.

"Uncle Jim, what's the difference between a politician and a statesman?" "A politician is a man who can talk, and a statesman is a man who can hold his tongue."—Chicago Record.

—An unusual sight was witnessed at Belfast, Ireland, some days ago, when there were in port vessels aggregating 109,430 tons, of which 70,680 tons were represented by ships undergoing repairs or fitting out at the Harland & Wolff plant.

Boggs.—"Here is something I can't understand: In Russia, when a senator offends he is given transportation."

Foggs.—"Yes?"

Boggs.—"And in this country when a senator offends, the railroads cut off his transportation."—Harlem Life.

—"Some folks do say that time is money," remarked the village storekeeper, "but I don't take much stock in it." "You don't, eh?" queried the loafer. "No, I don't," replied the storekeeper, "and I wish you'd spend a leetle more money here and a leetle less time."—Chicago News.

—The Interstate Commerce Commission in its last annual report stated that the number of employees killed on the railroads of the United States for the year ending June 30th, 1897, was about a thousand less than in the year ending June 30th, 1893; and an encouraging showing was also made of the diminution in the number of men killed and injured in coupling and uncoupling cars.

—The annual report of the Massachusetts Railroad Commission shows that the cost of roadbed repairs, including tie renewals, on the railroads of the state, during the year 1898, was 11.9 cents per train mile; this is 1.9 cents higher than 1895, and .2 cent lower than in 1896. The cost of renewing rails is given at one cent per train mile, which is .6 cent less than in 1893; .1 cent less than in 1895; .2 cent higher than in 1896, and .5 cent less than in 1897.

—A new steamship, named the "Lakonika," has just been completed by the London and Glasgow Engineering and Shipbuilding Company (Limited), at their yard at Govan, for Messrs. Donaldson Brothers' Canadian cattle and cargo trade. This is the second steamer the firm has built for Messrs. Donaldson Brothers within the last two years. The upper deck of the steamer is fitted throughout for cattle, and the main deck is so constructed as to be available for the same purpose. The after 'tween decks are divided into four refrigerating chambers for the carriage of Canadian dairy produce, frozen meat, etc.

—Notwithstanding the fact that negotiations between Japan and the Imperial Government, regarding the enactment passed by the British Columbia Government, placing restrictions on Japanese immigration, are still pending, Japan is by no means anxious to lose the profitable trade with this province. Consul Shimizu having received the following telegram from the Government: "Merchandise imported into Japan from Canada on or before the date of the operation of the new tariff between Japan and Great Britain, commencing 16th of July next, will be allowed to enjoy the conventional tariff, consequently you may issue certificates of origin for such goods if applied for."

—Apropos of the demand for more money made on behalf of the Montreal Public schools, it is interesting to note that while Montrealers pay in school taxes about \$325,000 a year, the people of Toronto pay nearly twice that amount. The estimate of the school expenses in Toronto for the current year, just submitted, is \$644,930. Montreal has probably 25 per cent. more people than Toronto, but spends about 50 per cent. less than Toronto in educating its children. There are conditions that make this comparison not altogether a fair one, but they are not sufficient to account for the difference shown. There can be no good ground for a refusal to give Montreal's schools the money they need to properly do their work.—Montreal Gazette.