

Dirt, which is "matter in the wrong place," according to a scientist of the humorous order, is another source of danger. Cotton waste, dust, smut, or middlings, in contact with oil, are all liable to spontaneous combustion. Great care should be exercised to insure proper cleansing of the premises. Whitewashing is recommended at intervals. Sweeping is not, as a rule, done often enough or half carefully enough, in mills. Oil-soaked matter or fragments of cottonwaste sometimes get away into corners and do mischief; care would prevent this.

But probably the most serious risk of all in flouring mills is that of explosion from the constant presence of inflammable dust. "A dry, hard grain," says this paper, "produces fine, dry dust, which hangs in the air in a favorable condition for explosions. A moist, soft grain produces a heavier flour which readily falls to the floor. A mill where the floors are covered with flour is not necessarily so liable to explosion as the one where the air is laden with dry dust. In cases where the grain is washed before reduction, the liability of explosion is probably reduced to a minimum. In mills situate at a seaport where the grain is received direct from the ship and ground in a hard, dry state, the danger of explosion is probably at a maximum. In Austria, where the mills are 'ed direct from the surrounding neighborhood, explosions are very rare; this may be in consequence of the uniform moisture of the grain, induced by the extreme regularity of the seasons. In America the winter is noted for the dryness of the air, and the summer for its dry heat. Explosions do not seem to have been the immediate causes of fires, but where a fire has occurred after explosion it has probably originated at the primary cause of explosion."

LIFE INSURANCE METHODS.

The easy going good nature with which people put their money into new and cheap-looking life assurance schemes, would make one think that money is easily earned when it is risked so readily. The *Chicago Tribune* condenses a large amount of sensible advice into ten "Don'ts" of which the following is to the point. "Don't, above all things, allow yourself to be talked into investing in 'Assessment Life Insurance.' It is a snare and a delusion. In no proper acceptance of that term can it be considered genuine life insurance. It promises no future certainty. It is like a rope of sand that is likely to go to pieces by the disintegration of its parts. Its policies are not marketable. Its promises are conditional. While it may have merit as a charity, it has none as genuine life insurance, which will provide for your family after you are gone. Genuine life insurance gives you a definite contract for the payment of a fixed sum at a time certain. It is the most substantial provision for the security of those dependent upon us that has been yet devised by man. Assessment insurance per contra may involve you in financial ruin since each member is legally liable to all others, you cannot honorably escape assessment, you still remain financially responsible even though you cannot compel an assessment in behalf of your heirs after your demise."

The Illinois Masons' Benevolent Society,

an assessment association, similar to the London, (Ont.), Masonic Mutual, seems rapidly on the way to ruin. It had, at the beginning of 1885, 4,340 members holding certificates for \$17,893,000, and ended 1886 with only 2,777 members holding \$11,195,000, loss of membership in two years 1,563 holding \$6,698,000. The death losses paid were 129 for \$411,136. The unpaid death claims on January 1, 1887 were \$43,975. In 1878, it had over 5,000 members and the cost per \$1,000 to each was \$8.70 but is now over \$21 besides expenses. This decline is characteristic of so many societies in the States—witness the crowd of Pennsylvania and Ohio associations and the long list we published the other day from Michigan—that it is a wonder the general public is not warfed that there *must* be something faulty about the principle or the working, or both, of assessment insurance companies.

THE WOOD TRADE IN BRITAIN.

British trade returns for May indicate an improved condition of general trade, in that the exports of British produce and manufactures are increased for the month while the imports are less by more than a million pounds. The estimated values are respectively, as compared with last year, as follows:

Imports for May, 1886.....£29,023,303
" " 1887..... 27,921,321

Showing a reduction of.....£ 1,101,982
(after 5 millions excess in April.)
Exports for May, 1887..... 16,497,836
Against declared value in May 1886. 16,501,022

Gain on last month..... £196,814

This is exclusive of the increase of £107,986 in re-exports of imported goods. This, in the words of an exchange, "denotes the increasing animation of our national industries."

At the same time, imports of timber keep up to a degree which is hardly reassuring of the stability of prices, if the forecasts of commercial journals are correct. The *Timber Trades Journal* of 11th June, says: "But with the timber trade we have to reckon exceptionally, for that has increased its import essentially, while most other trades are keeping within careful bounds. Sawn, hewn and planed, 123,176 loads more timber have come forward from overseas than in May last year, which would properly represent about 200 average spring cargoes, which should stand for evidence of a largely increasing trade; but of that we have only small corroborative testimony. The total increase up to date on the figures of last year is no less than 238,277 loads."

"Let us hope that the extra requirements of the building trade, for the substantial and permanent memorials of Her Majesty's Jubilee, will at least clear that lot away. Otherwise it would almost look like rather venture-some business to be increasing the stocks on this side at so rapid a rate." Still there remains the encouraging fact that stocks at Liverpool are smaller now than a year ago, and the London supply at end of May was sixty cargoes short of that of 1st June, 1886. The following are the official returns for the five months ending May 31st, 1886 and 1887, compared:—

	QUANTITY.		VALUE.
	1886.	1887.	
Timber (hewn). Loads.			£
Russia.....	15,425	26,275	48,726
Sweden & Norway..	187,777	240,622	313,828
Germany.....	44,534	71,540	167,517
United States.....	39,449	25,313	104,784
British E. Indies,..	18,225	8,137	81,225
British N. America.	3,854	1,280	4,233
Other Countries....	180,555	198,899	198,036
Total.....	489,819	572,066	918,349

Timber (sawn or split planed or dressed).			
Russia.....	50,451	126,319	214,452
Sweden & Norway..	277,911	378,167	767,895
United States.....	117,986	86,761	240,676
British N. America.	34,524	38,708	75,294
Other Countries....	18,953	35,900	71,036

Total.....499,825 655,855 1,369,353
Staves (all sizes).... 33,421 43,061 202,730
Mahogany (tons).... 21,587 19,835 165,237
Total of hewn and sawn.....989,644 1,227,921 2,287,702

With respect to the view that the present cheapness of money in the United Kingdom ought to stimulate the wood trade into activity, the *Journal* points out that the rate of discount even when as low as the present one of 1 per cent. of good bank paper, has very little effect on the timber trade where long-dated bills are the rule. "Moreover, the present surplus of money is more apparent than real, resulting from a comparatively small amount of floating and unemployed capital, which would be speedily absorbed on the earliest indications of pressure."

—The movement of merchandize at Montreal in a wholesale way has been this week of a character usual to the season, the numerous religious and national holidays having, as our correspondent mildly puts it, "a quieting effect on trade." Ten days ago was held the *fete* of Corpus Christi, the 21st inst. was the day of the Jubilee celebration, and was universally observed by all classes in that city; the 24th is St. Jean Baptiste day, the 29th will be the *fete d'obligation* of St. Peter and St. Paul, and with Dominion Day added to these, the province will surely be allowed to have a rest from holidays for some time. Then will be the time to look for some more life in business. The outlook is considered, by Montreal merchants, promising; crop prospects throughout Quebec are favorable as far as can be noted, with the exception that hay will be a rather short crop in some sections of this province, the late fertilizing rains being almost to late to be of great benefit in this particular. Money is coming in well, wholesale dealers say, there being very few exceptions to the general report on this head.

—The Toronto Stock Exchange has been somewhat affected by the disturbances in financial circles across the lines. Bank of Montreal shares suffered the most, declining over two per cent. to 232½ in bids. Shares in other banks were only slightly easier, with but limited transactions. Western Assurance developed exceptional strength, the business for the past six months being reported as very satisfactory. It sold up to 161, closing with that price asked and 160½ bid. Telegraph shares and gas were easier, the latter declining 4, to 180, for buyers. Not a single sale of Canada North-West is recorded. Excepting a decline in Ontario Investment Association, loan societies shares were featureless.

—The contract has been let for doubling the track of the Grand Trunk Railway between Montreal and Toronto. There could be no stronger proof of the growth and importance of the traffic between these two points than this.

—The last dividend of the Canada Permanent Loan & Savings' Company was the 54th semi-annual one, and was declared at the customary rate of twelve per cent. yearly.

—The Western Canada Loan and Savings Co. announces its 48th half-yearly dividend at the usual annual rate of ten per cent.