

JOTTINGS.

BY JUNIUS, JUNIOR.

The Editor of this paper having placed a column of space in each issue at the disposal of the writer, it becomes his duty to introduce himself and briefly state the purposes to which the column will be devoted.

In the particular interests served by *THE INSURANCE AND FINANCE CHRONICLE*, there is surely scope enough to make material for more space than can be placed each fortnight at the disposal of one writer, so that it will be quite evident I cannot hope or expect to be all embracing or all absorbing—quite as naturally will the writer frequently record items of interest in connection with his own particular business, tinged with his own particular fads, enunciating his own particular doctrines. Time will show what this special branch of the financial world is.

In the disconnected and rambling jottings there will be no indulgence in personalities, nor will there be any pretence at learned disquisitions on vital topics of interest to the financial world. To thus use this column would be to transgress upon the Editorial department, or that of the news gatherer; rather will the column be used to string together in a few sentences things that have happened, to suggest things that should happen, and in a general way allow the writer to have his say on matters which may safely find a place in "Jottings."

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During the past fortnight I have had an opportunity of meeting several prominent men in the Fire Insurance world, and on the morning of the 3rd October there seemed to exist amongst them a general impression that the process of law was most uncertain and tedious. Something like consternation existed in the ranks by reason of two adverse decisions which had been rendered the day previously in the Court of Appeal. In the case of the *Richelieu & Ontario Navigation Co.* and fifteen companies, there were fifteen disappointed offices. But what a judgment! In the Lower Court I understand a presiding judge (and a good commercial judge, too) sustained the Companies by upholding the validity of an "appraisal" of the damage to "*The Corinthian*"; by such appraisal two competent shipwrights awarded as the damage the sum of \$20,000 upon an insurance of \$40,000. This amount was entirely unacceptable to the "*R. & O.N. Co.*", who sued to set aside the award; defeated in the Lower Court, they appealed to the Appeal side, and lo! and behold, they get all they want, and, I understand, more than they hoped for. I hope you will publish the judgment in full, if for nothing else than to show your readers how easy it is for a number of legal minds to settle the damages on a steamboat at twice the amount awarded by two practical men, who saw the burnt hull, and doubtless have forgotten as much about steamers as the learned judges ever knew.

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The other case was even more incomprehensible, for if ever suitor was sure of victory, the "*N.B. & M.*" were in their appeal against the decision of a Lower Court in the case of *N. B. & M. vs. Tourville*. I have

not space to further refer to this case, and only mention it to bear out the opinion I have gathered as the result of my recent conversations with the Fire Insurance men already referred to, that in the field of Fire Insurance it is generally conceded that the Companies are sure losers. Sam Weller's caustic remark "Beware of the Widows" may not inaptly be paraphrased "Beware of the Law".

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In Toronto, recently, the charge of arson against one Prittie was being tried, and I am told the Defendant's lawyer, a prominent Insurance lawyer, by the way, in the course of his address informed the Jury that everybody knew the ways of Fire Insurance Companies, adding by way of emphasis—"I do." When this was told to me I naturally thought,—what are the ways the lawyer in question referred to, are they so dreadfully bad? Perhaps in the near future the subject may be locked into, and if I ascertain anything worth recording, I may insert a paragraph or two in "Jottings" to interest your Fire Insurance readers in the conclusion of one, who, while having some interest in the business, professes to be able to appreciate alike their "tricks that are mean" and their ways that are good.

Notes and Items.

Hydrants inside lumber yards are suggested by the *Daily States*. The idea is worth considering.

Insurance against sickness amongst working people is about to be undertaken by the government of Norway.

The *Reliance Mutual Insurance Co., Ltd.*, has been licensed to carry on the business of Inland Marine Insurance.

The *Agricultural Insurance Co., Watertown, N.Y.*, has been licensed to carry on in Canada the business of Cyclone and Tornado Insurance.

The *Sugar Planters' Mutual Insurance Co.*, of Louisiana, has opened up business of the class of risks the title indicates.

The *Argus*, of Chicago, has in its last issue a number of well executed portraits of members of the North West Fire Underwriters' Association.

Pittsburg fire insurance agents have formed a "Clearing House Association," to facilitate prompt collection of inter-agency accounts.

A report on Lloyds has been submitted to the New York Chamber of Commerce by the Insurance Committee, in which this system is handled without ceremony.

The State Commissioners for Insurance, of Ohio, Illinois, Texas and Kansas, have been in the city making an examination of the Canadian business of the New York Life Insurance Co., in connection with the general investigation being made at the Company's own suggestion. We have every confidence in their finding everything, for which Mr. David Burke is responsible, in a satisfactory state.