

# The Chronicle

## Insurance & Finance.

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**Bankers' Simple Acknowledgment Sufficient.** Among our Recent Legal Decisions will be found one of interest to men of business who have bonds or securities about the custody of which they are bothered. A decision of interest to some insurance companies is also given.

### To Canadian Bank Managers.

We commend to the attention of our bank managers, the article on page 999 of this issue conveying "A Lesson from the Australian Mint." There would certainly seem to be no prospect whatever of maintaining a Mint in the Dominion of Canada, where paper is current and gold coins seldom seen outside of the banks, except at the cost of the taxpayers. The opinion of the chief official of the English Mint is deserving of careful consideration by the earnest advocates of the establishment of a Mint in this country.

**Fire!** The value of an instantaneous alarm in case of fire was strikingly manifested in a case reported in the New York papers.

A freight steamer, the "Bovic," discharging cargo at the White Star pier, was discovered to be on fire. The watchman ran to the street alarm-box, but before he reached there the engines passed him on the way to the pier. It seems that the alarm was sent to fire headquarters from the Manhattan Auxilliary Fire Alarm Co.'s station at the end of the pier. Although the fire was found to have started among cotton in the steamer's hold, the loss only amounted to \$1,000.

Some of the wharves and warehouses in Montreal might be protected in a similar way. The early arrival of the firemen sometimes means millions to property owners.

### The Mortality in South Africa.

It seems quite likely that Mr. Wm. Ashmead Bartlett Burdett-Coutts will succeed in making himself quite as objectionable to the leading members of the British

House of Commons as Mr. Astor has in society circles in the land of his adoption. It is certain that everything possible was done for the sick and wounded at the different hospitals in South Africa, and there is nothing to be gained by a recapitulation of the sufferings of the gentlemen in khaki who had to endure the hardship and exposure incidental to the life of a soldier during a very arduous campaign. Mr. Bartlett Burdett-Coutts' uneasiness lest Tommy Atkins in giving evidence before the commission should fail, through fear, to substantiate the grave charges of mismanagement of the hospitals, rendered him a fair mark for the scorn and contempt of Mr. Balfour. It seems a pity that the testimony of Canadians who have been invalidated home has not been forwarded to Mr. Balfour. Our boys, at least, are not "afraid to testify" to what they have seen, heard, and felt, and they unite in saying that all the attention possible was shown to the thousands of wounded and fever-stricken soldiers who so severely tested the resources of the army medical service.

No one supposes that any sick or wounded soldier has been wilfully neglected, and it is to be regretted that the husband of the benevolent Baroness Burdett-Coutts had not found his way to the front, instead of hanging about like a camp follower, and engaging in a search for sources of the misery and wretchedness of the wounded, the mangled, and the slain.

War, even in the best state of an army, with all the alleviations of courtesy and honour, with all the correctives of morality and religion, is a great evil, and the woe and anguish and despair of those who suffer may well be shielded from the contemplation of their loved ones.

We do not know if the castigation administered to the member for Westminster will close his mouth, but we hope to hear no more of his South African researches.

If there had been wilful waste of life, the interested assurance companies would be up in arms.