An interesting financial event now in process of development is the amalgamation of the National Bank of Commerce and the Western National Bank, which will result in a National bank, with a capital of $25,000,000. These banks were practically controlled by the Mutual Life and the Equitable, which will now apparently have large financial interests in common.

The firm of Pate & Robb, of this city, large insurance brokers, and controlling vast cotton insurance interests in North Carolina, sought to overcome the difficulties caused by the resident agents' law of that State, by incorporating as a North Carolina institution. The firm has received a setback, however, as the Commissioner of the State refuses to license the new corporation as a local insurance agent.

Mr. F. C. Moore, ex-president of the Continental Insurance Company, who has just sailed for Europe, has issued a new book, entitled "Fire Insurance, and How to Build," which is attracting considerable attention in insurance circles.

In this correspondence we some time ago referred to the unprofitable character of certain electrical business. A company doing a general business states that its experience on this class for two years resulted in the writing of 959 risks, with premiums of $47,737, a loss of 77 per cent.

The Fidelity and Casualty Company will make a stock dividend of 100 per cent., making its capital stock $500,000.

The little Nassau Fire Insurance Company will enter Missouri, but what this pigmy expects to accomplish in that storm centre of hostility and hatred to fire insurance it is difficult to conjecture.

The German American, of this city, has entered Mexico, a field which should prove attractive for a larger number of insurance companies.

The companies doing an annuity business in this state received last year $9,377,695 as annuity deposits, and paid out to annuitants, $4,834,328.

NEW YORK STOCK LETTER.

Office of Cummings & Co., 20 Broad St., New York City.

New York, April 29, 1903.

Dullness has been the feature of the past week, and the exodus of many of the prominent financial men to Europe and other quarters for various terms of vacation is not calculated to exert any stimulating effect upon the market, but on the contrary is quite likely to produce a season of inactivity with fluctuations within very narrow limits.

For a time, the very extraordinary demands which were said to have been made by Russia with respect to the Manchurian Territory, unsettled the market as visions of future complications with that country were discussed, and while the disclaimer put forth by Russia regarding this matter has somewhat allayed this uneasiness, there is no telling when it will break out again, for there is no question whatever but that Russia means to have Manchuria, and possibly Mongolia as well, but certainly the former, for her trans-Siberian railroad runs through this Province to Vladivostock, on the Japanese sea, and, naturally, she will desire to protect this property to the fullest extent, but how far the other nations of the world will allow her to absorb Chinese Territory, remains to be seen. One thing, however, is certain, and that is that Siberia is to be opened up in the near future, and what that will mean to the roads on this continent having Pacific Coast connections, can readily be seen by any one who will take the trouble to look into the matter. Another legal decision, that relative to the assessment of the Franchise Tax, has been handed down this week, which, if enforced, would compel the city railroads to pay some $18,000,000 of back taxes. An appeal from this decision has, however, been taken to the United States Supreme Court, so that it will be a considerable time before the matter is really settled. Contrary to the usual action of the market when an adverse decision is rendered, it went up a little probably on the ground that while the companies have not paid these taxes, they have set the various amounts aside, and could therefore pay them without trouble.

Another decision by the Inter-State Commerce Commission that has considerably disturbed some of the railroad officials is that affecting the rates of freight on grain between Chicago and the seaboard. It is thought, however, that when the matter is properly presented to the Commission, and the members of it realize the increased cost of transportation now owing to various circumstances, that they will be willing to somewhat modify the decision just rendered.

The refunding plan of the Secretary of the Treasury is meeting with great succes, and of the $100,000,000, nearly one-half have already been converted, and this has enabled the banks to increase their circulation over $11,524,000. This operation and the return flow of fund from the interior has brought the rates for money down to 2½ per cent., which has permitted of the return of quite a number of sterling loans, and has naturally caused an advance in the rates of exchange, and started considerable discussion regarding gold shipments, one shipment of $500,000 having already been made by a Philadelphia bank. Why and how this institution should be able to ship when New York houses see no profit in such transactions is one of the mysteries.

The Bank Statement of Saturday, as was expected, made a good showing, whereupon the market promptly declined. Why it should do so no one could say, except that at the present time it appears to delight in doing just contrary to what it has always done heretofore under similar circumstances.

In the returns of earnings by the railroads for the third week in April, the Canadian Pacific heads the list with an increase of $110,000, while other companies follow with smaller amounts, but all making a very good showing. The opening of Lake navigation, however, has materially reduced the volume of East-bound shipments by rail, but this will enable the roads to clear up their lines of freight which has accumulated. The Erie statement for the past nine months shows tremendous increases in earnings. During the month of March the increase in net earnings was $312,235, and for the nine months ending March 31 they increased $1,306,226, the net earnings being $10,173,753.83. As a result of official changes, which have recently taken place in the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Company, this Company will soon complete arrangements by which it will build all of its locomotives in its own shops. Heretofore, this company has bought its machines from various builders, but during the past two years it has expended nearly $1,000,000 upon its West Milwaukee property, and, as a result, has one of the best equipped plants in the West. The policy of manufacturing for their own needs is an excellent one, and should very largely increase the revenues of the companies so doing.

The Chicago Great Western, to which attention has been directed in some previous letters, is keeping up its record for progressive ideas and up-to-date methods, upon the extension which is being built to Omaha. Night and day shifts of men are being worked, electric light plants having been established at important points to provide light for the night workers. The completion of this branch will greatly strengthen the position of this Company.

The Detroit Southern is another property which is showing signs of growth, and one which investors will do well to watch. The connection between this road and the Iron Railway Company, which it acquired last year, will shortly be made, and this will give the Detroit Southern a line from the lakes to the Ohio River, and it is expected that it will soon reach the coal fields of Kentucky and West Virginia. It is proposed to increase the capital from $16,000,000, to $25,000,000, in order to provide for such extensions.