

# FINANCE AND INSURANCE

**M**ONEY is in excellent demand now in Canada. The activity in many lines of manufacture, the opening up of new stores throughout the West and in New Ontario, called into being by the increased settlement of the country and the liberal purchases of goods for the Spring trade, are all absorbing large sums of money, and rates are being well maintained. Higher rates of interest are being obtained on real estate loans than a year ago. The banks and other financial institutions are in the best position they have occupied in years.

A sure sign of the growing security and stability of the money market is the fact that since the first of January, 1904, railroad and other corporations in high credit, needing large amounts of additional capital, either for the purpose of extending their operations or making up for inadequate working capital, have experienced no serious difficulty in obtaining the necessary assistance from bankers. It marks a significant change in the attitude of financiers throughout the country from that of the Summer and Autumn of 1903 when the so-called undigested securities gave such a chill to the investing public. It also goes to show that an unimpaired condition of credit, where corporations of the highest grade are concerned, will lead to an equal degree of readiness on the part of investors to take on favorable terms the obligations of railroad companies. Where the calls on the money market are for the purpose of financing deals, combinations and new acquisitions, instead of on capital account, the public who have recently learned a bitter lesson in the school of experience will be prompt to detect the difference between them and the legitimate requirements for new capital with which to provide for additional facilities, new equipment, etc., and will undoubtedly be led to exercise a certain degree of conservatism and hesitancy.

The professional man may be in the enjoyment of a good income, but is not often successful in accumulating an estate. Wholly absorbed in his profession he has little opportunity to study methods of money-making, or to master the problems of finance and investment. To such men life insurance is peculiarly adapted. They require little capital in their business. It is generally merely a question whether they will spend their entire income, or save a part of it. In the latter case, life insurance presents the most available plan. A portion of the income thus applied, provides for the family in case of the death of the insured, and guarantees a competence for his old age.—Life Insurance Independent.

The Bank of British North America, Toronto, is again occupying its old premises at the corner of Yonge and Wellington streets, which have been entirely remodelled. Improvements to the extent of \$60,000 have been made in its building, the upper floors of which have been hand-

somely fitted up as up-to-date business offices, the second flat for the new Toronto clearing house, with the ground floor is occupied exclusively by the Bank of British North America. The prevailing tone in the banking offices proper is buff. Wainscoting counters and pillars are of onyx and Italian marble. High arched ceilings lend an air of spaciousness to the interior which for quiet elegance is not to be surpassed by anything in the city. The general manager, Mr. Inglis, says business has never been more promising than at the present time. His own bank has reason to be more than satisfied, and it is gradually enlarging its staff to keep pace with the increasing demands of business.

## STEALING INSURANCE.

**I**T is claimed that at least 30 or 40 per cent. of all claims at fires of \$10,000 or less in New York are fraudulent and that the fire insurance companies have been cheated out of millions this year. Authorities are investigating this alleged systematic swindling and have already brought to light some of the inner workings of the system. Not only are prominent merchants implicated, but members of the fire patrol of the various insurance companies, city officials and public adjusters as well. One adjuster recently convicted confesses that of 300 cases adjusted by him only two were not fraudulent.

Such adjusters will take contracts to adjust a fire loss on any terms. Then they will endeavor to prevail upon their client to pad his loss, generally by bribing the member of the fire patrol left by the insurance company to watch the property. They will pay him to wet or to destroy goods on the premises where the fire has occurred. Or they will pay him to move goods from a floor where no damage has been done to that where the fire has actually been, or to put labels of more expensive goods on the damaged packages.

Another frequent form of swindling is where the merchant goes to wholesale dealers after a fire and obtains receipted bills for goods that never have been delivered. Alterations are thus made in the books to suit the demands of the occasion or else the books are destroyed. The insurance companies have apparently been connived at from all quarters, now it looks as if the connivers would have to pay for their folly.

## WHY THE BANKS PREFER THE MERCHANT.

**D**URING 1903 Canadian banks granted the demands of merchants, manufacturers, farmers, and the general public in loans amounting to \$63,516,473 more than those of 1902. During the same period call loans or loans on stock collateral decreased \$12,849,301. At intervals through the year brokers tried to borrow largely from the banks but were politely turned down. On the other hand the class of borrowers first mentioned seems to have had no difficulty in obtaining all the funds