

Brockville.—Messrs. Berger & Beique have received the contract from the Corporation of Brockville to place eighty-five hydrants in the streets of that city immediately—the number to be afterward increased to one hundred. The agreement is that the Corporation pays the contractors a rent of \$50 a year for fifty years for each hydrant, with a right to purchase the whole at the end of any ten years, at a price to be fixed by arbitration. The contractors intend to erect two brick buildings, measuring 35 feet by 40 and 35 feet by 60 respectively, beside a coal shed 70 feet by 140. The engines will be capable of pumping up three million gallons of water from the St. Lawrence every twenty-four hours. The same water works will supply the Grand Trunk—who now pay nearly \$4,000 a year for water—at \$3,000 a year, and the Canadian Pacific at \$1,000. Any of the citizens who wish it may also arrange to connect with the system.

THE INSURANCE MEN'S OWN SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Toronto is a great headquarters for insurance men of all kinds. A large number of foreign companies have general offices for the Province or Dominion in this city, while several Canadian companies have their head offices here, and nearly every company under the sun has at least one agent located among us. The result is a mighty host of insurance mechanics of one stamp or another. It would take a company of itself to insure them all—and it would have a nice job of it, truly. But they are here, and they intend to stay. As a result there is much opposition among the several companies.

The opposition got so lively lately that it was determined to form a local board of underwriters which would promote the interests of the companies, raise the dignity and introduce a better morale into the profession, and above all prevent cutting rates.

Regular meetings are held of the board, or as we would rather call it, of the insurance men's Sunday school. The order of proceedings are somewhat of this nature: After these lively gents have come in and are seated a brother, generally a bald-headed one, rises and gives out the hymn—

Cut, brothers, cut, cut with caire,
Cut very seldom for the insuraire,
A one-eighth cut for a great big faire,
A very small cut for a very small faire,
But cut very seldom and always with caire.

This little hymn is sung with wonderful unction and grace. Every teacher and pupil is the picture of apparent innocence, though an uneasy feeling may be observed in every man jack of them, for not one of them but has been cutting during the previous week, and he is, notwithstanding his apparent self-sufficiency, looking round to see if any one has found him out.

The presiding deacon next arises and says: "I am glad to see so many of you boys at school to-day. Everything is working nicely, and I see you all are looking sleek and well fed. You have no doubt had a good week in taking risks. That is right. But, my boys, avoid cutting. I know by your faces that that evil habit does not prevail any longer amongst us. Or if it does it is only to a trifling extent. Just to see I'll catechise you on this point."

"You, Master Dick, have you cut any since last we had the pleasure of assembling together in brotherly love?"

"No, sir, I never cut," simpers Master Dick. Bedlam broke loose. Cries of, "Oh, what a whopper;" "I know of two policies you cut on myself;" "listen to the liar;" "hasn't he a cheek," etc., etc.

What follows beggars description. Every agent suddenly takes to charging every other one present with the most barefaced acts of cutting. This now keeps up for half an hour. At last order is restored. An old bald-head gets up, and says its too bad that this little unpleasantness should occur; really members ought to have some regard for the proprieties; if there has been any cutting it was evidently through some misunderstanding; but to prevent such a thing again he suggests that a little agreement forswearing to cut be drawn up and all sign it; he is confident that after that things will run along quite smoothly; and harmony prevail.

This throws oil on the troubled waters; all sign the document, and before the school breaks up the superintendent gives out the hymn:

No, no, never make cuts any more,
No, no, never make cuts any more;
Never make cuts, never make cuts, never make cuts any more.
"What, never?" shouts a bootblack.
"No, never," is the sad refrain, and a rush is made to take the boy's—life.

Toronto World.

WAIFS AND STRAYS.

A Hint. Sir Pompey Bedell—"Oh-er-Mr. Grigsby, I think! How d'ye do?"

Grigsby—"I hope I see you well, Sir Pompey. And next time you give me two fingers, I'm blest if I don't pull 'em off!"—*Punch*.

A young fellow in an insurance office curiously caught a glance of a "sub-head" in the June 27th *Spectator*, and took the number to his boarding house for his girl to read. The word was "Mashing," but the article related to causes of fires in breweries. The young lady failed to feel any interest in the subject.

A Drop in the Ocean. Yes, my boy, there are fifty-three millions and two hundred thousand people in this country. And you are only one of them. Just one. Think of that once and a while, when you get to wondering what would happen to the world if you should die.—*Burlington Hawkeye*.

During one of the hot June days, a lady in Connecticut smelt a burning of something upstairs. She investigated a closely shut closet. On opening the door, a bag of carpet rags instantly burst into a flame. The rags had been there all the winter. Upon examination, it was found that only the balls of cotton rags had burned.

Drawbacks of Progress. "How is it," says a dweller at a seaside resort to the postman, "how is it that you are so much slower getting round with the mail this year than you were last?"

"Well, sir, you see, things ain't as convenient now as they were then. I used to know all the houses, but they've gone and numbered 'em!"

IT NEVER PAYS.

It never pays to fret and growl
When fortune seems our foe;
The better bred will look ahead,
And strike the braver blow.
For luck is work,
And those who shirk
Should not lament their doom;
But yield the play,
And clear the way,
That better men have room.

It never pays to wreck the health
In drudging after gain;
And he is sold who thinks that gold
Is cheapest bought with pain.
An humble lot,
A cosy cot,
Have tempted even Kings,
For station high,
That wealth will buy,
Not oft contentment brings.

It never pays! A blunt refrain,
Well worthy of a song.
For age and youth must learn the truth,
That nothing pays that's wrong.
The good and pure
Alone are sure
To bring prolonged success;
While what is right
In heaven's sight
Is always sure to bless.

—ANONYMOUS.