President Irvin, of the Fire Association, deserves to be commended for what he has been trying to do in the way of re-organizing the New York Tariff Association. It is shameful that a business like that of fire insurance should fall into such a villainous rut as it has in New York City. It demoralizes not only the business in that city but the business everywhere, and it is not just that property-owners in other cities and towns should have to carry the burden and make good losses which must accrue in the metropolis of this country.—(Black and White).

WHAT THE EXPANSION POLICY MEANS.—It is the fashion just now for Yankees, while pluming themselves upon their victory over the Spaniards and congratulating themselves that Providence has chosen them as the instruments of the civilization or extermination of the Cubans and Filipinos, to deplore the fact that our army and navy have been so small and to promise and plan to increase both until they are the equals of any on earth and sea; but when we consider what the new policy means in the way of expense, which must be borne by the common people, and the waste of the best years of the youth of the country in military service, we can well excuse those cautious persons who, at the risk of being called Bourbons and Copperheads, are asking whether, after all, the old Monroe policy, which called for only the skeleton of an army and the nucleus of a navy, was not and is not a sound one.—[Manchester (N. H.) Mirror (Rep.).]

REJECTION OF "DOUBTFUL" LIVES.—While fully recognizing the necessity for caution, and the advantage of extreme care in selection, the rejection of lives as "doubtful" may be carried too far. A case recently came under our own notice in which the medical officer of a company sent in a report upon a life which involved a slight element of undesirability, recommending the imposition of an extra rate. The life, however, was summarily rejected, to the surprise of the doctor and those who knew the applicant himself. Statistics are as yet scanty, but we fully endorse the conclusion of the writer referred to, that the collection and tabulation of the actual mortality figures regarding the various classes of doubtful lives would prove of great assistance in fixing equitable rates for the same. The present system of treating each risk on its own merits is attended with serious defects when unsupported by the results of more general experience. —*Insurance News*, Manchester.

A POOR YEAR FOR FIRE BUSINESS.—The recent destruction of New Westminster by fire, has put many British offices in mourning, and they have virtually abandoned hope of escape from having to admit that 1898 ranks among the lean years. The *Insurance News*, of Manchester, Eng., editorially comments thus upon the outlook:—We are afraid that 1898 will prove to be a very poor year for fire business. We are now suffering from that climax of unfavourable conditions, fires up, and rates down. The sole remaining chance was the absence of conflagrations, and we were cherishing the hope that when November arrived, and we got level with the twin disasters of London and Melbourne, there might yet be a prospect of redemption. The great fire at New Westminster, British Columbia, is a partial blow to this expectation. The British offices will suffer severely by this visitation. It is stated that the business portion of the town has been reduced to ruins, and the residential quarter partially destroyed. Very wild estimates have been put forth as to the amount of loss, but we are afraid that the insurance companies will suffer to the extent of some £250,000, and the bulk of this sum, it is expected, will have to be provided by the British offices.

TOTAL LOSS IN MARINE INSURANCE.—Where a ship has been sunk in deep water, the underwriters cannot escape liability as for a total constructive loss by gratuitously intervening and taking upon themselves, between the date of notice of abandonment and the time when legal proceedings are commenced under the policy, the expenses of raising the insured vessel, and saving her from being a constructive total loss. Such a gratuitous expenditure will not relieve the underwriters from their contractual liability. In considering whether a constructive total loss has occurred, the question is whether a ship owner of ordinary prudence and uninsured would have gone to the expense of raising a sunken ship and repairing her. 1898, App. Cas. 593.

PERSONALS.

MR. HORACE FLEMMING, Local Manager, at Halifax, of the Bank of Nova Scotia, recently visited the Canadian metropolis. Mr. Flemming has been holiday-making in the United States.

MR. FREDERICK LEONARD GOVETT, (Messrs Govett, Sons & Co.), of London, is at present in Montreal. Mr. Govett will leave for the West in a few days, and intends to see Chicago and other American cities before returning home, via Montreal, about the middle of October.

MR. J. TOWER BOYD, Superintendent of Agencies, of the Confederation Life Association is in Montreal, where he is always sure of a warm welcome by his many friends, and those interested in the Confederation Life, in whose welfare Mr. Boyd is ever and always working.

MR. A. MCDOUGALD, Manager of the British Empire Mutual Life Assurance Co., has recently returned from a visit to his Head Office in London, G. B. Mr. McDougald states the amount of capital said to be available in the world's metropolis, for the prosecution of business, is simply astounding, and that even those who have always known London as a great city, must be struck with the signs of its ever increasing growth in wealth and population.

MR. F. WOLFERSTAN THOMAS, General Manager of Molsons' Bank, has returned from his summer's sojourn in Europe, greatly improved in health, much to the relief of those who know of the pride and interest he takes in the hospitals, and other institutions of Montreal, to which he devotes his leisure time. Mr. Wolferstan Thomas' visit to the land of his birth after so many years absence, must have been of absorbing interest to him. THE CHRONICLE joins in the warm welcome extended to this excellent banker and worthy citizen upon his safe return to Canada.