

policy during the progress of a fire, nor claim that its liability ceased at sharp 12 o'clock, but must keep said policy in force until the conclusion of the casualty. Therefore, the new company whose policy was to commence at 12 o'clock is not liable, as at that time the building was in process of destruction, and the contract to indemnify on the part of the assurers likewise carries with it a covenant on the part of the assured that at the time the policy commenced the subject insured was real and existent. Moreover as it was specially understood that the new policy was not to obtain until the expiration of the old one, and, as it shews above that the old policy must continue in force while the fire lasts, the new policy is clearly not liable. Of course, if the fire had been totally extinguished, but at a later hour broke out anew, the new company would be liable for the further damage.

REINA.

Halifax, N.S., Feb. 7th, 1900.

Mr. Editor.—As I know that you take much interest in insurance business, I will ask a space in your paper for a thing which is of great interest for all business men.

Last Friday a fire broke out in a building occupied by a boot and shoe store and a dry goods store. As soon as the fire was out, the companies' agent, Mr. C. W. Rocheleau, went at work and looked for salvage, and of what would certainly have been a total loss and something over the bargain for assured's, the stocks amounting to over \$13,000 I heard, with only \$6,000 insurance, if things had been left to themselves, as is the case with most agents. Mr. Rocheleau had the pleasure to see both claims settled for less than \$2,000—making a salvage of 66 per cent., or \$4,000. Why, Mr. Editor, are not the agents instructed to look for salvage as soon as a fire takes place? Do you think I would not prefer to see the agent I am insured with saving \$4,000 for his companies than to be exposed to lose \$1,000 or more in waiting for adjusters, while the damage increases all the time. The company and assured are both interested in this question, and managers should try and resolve it. Thanking you, Mr. Editor, I am, yours truly,

A MERCHANT.

Three Rivers, P.Q., Feb. 13th, 1900.

LONDON LETTER.

1st February, 1900.

FINANCE.

So accustomed does one get to the difference in amount shown by the profits earned by new companies when compared with the rosy estimates of their prospectuses that when a case comes along where a new company actually earns more than was estimated it deserves to be written down. Readers of THE CHRONICLE will remember the successful flotation of Borax Consolidated, Limited, in 1899. This phenomenon has succeeded in coining a net profit of \$1,215,000 in its first year's trading. A dividend of

\$6.25 per \$50 share is paid, and over half a million is placed in the reserves.

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This will be an additional and timely gain to the movement for commercial and manufacturing combines. Just before this present date the systematic trend towards the trustification of industries had received several checks. Four or five big schemes for the coalescence of businesses in the North had "ganged agley," and a slump in combine sentiment had resulted.

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The projected bill-posting combination which Robert Youde and his wife were both so instrumental in booming a couple of years ago it will be recollected fell through. Ever since, the pair having been doing their best to revive their Napoleonic scheme with its capital of about twenty millions. At last rumors are getting round that all hope of its revival must be abandoned. Quarrels which cannot be reconciled have broken out between the Youdes and all the other great bill-posting and advertising contractors, and unless the latter submit to the voluntary payment of heavy damages for breaches of the old contract there will be an unlimited number of cases in the courts.

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It is scarcely necessary to say that the disaster at Spion Kop introduced a financial *debacle* for some days, which looked gloomier by contrast with the enthusiasm that the capture of the hill had inspired. Things are working round again as they have often worked round before, and there is no doubt that these repeated shocks, whilst making the average man more and more determined to lend his support to a policy, of "seeing it through" in South Africa, makes him more cautious in speculating on 'Change.

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Grand Trunks were about the only bright spot in the prevailing gloom, and their excellent traffic returns, promising business prospects, and friendly relations with rival roads, all tended to an activity and a rise. Even men of an older generation to whom Grand Trunk stock was a vehicle of sorrow are beginning to see that the old order has given place to the new—very much to the investor's advantage.

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Just when the sky is temporarily clouded in South Africa, it is interesting to note that a great deal of additional attention is being devoted to our Indian empire by British traders. The trade for 1898-99 was the biggest on record, and the benefits conferred by a comparatively stable rate of exchange are wonderfully well demonstrated. But even yet India has hardly begun her development. Though her civilization of a sort dates back to days when Tentons and Kelts were on a lower level than the wild Kaffir of modern South Africa, she is out of touch with modern progressive ideas. It is in these that she is beginning to dimly feel her way, and as she develops she will shine in commerce as she has shone in speculative philosophy—providing always that those accidental factors that have played so prominent a part in the world's history keep out of the way.

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The record of the output of gold from the Witwatersrand mines is with certain small exceptions complete now for 1899. All through the first nine months