

to be used in the ordinary stoves and furnaces, and it is stated that the cost of use will not exceed per hour, one and a half cents. If the coal strike continues, and a cold snap comes along, it is certain that hundreds of these and other new devices will be introduced into houses, for heating purposes. This sort of plant implies a convenient barrel of coal oil, with perhaps pipes of communication with it, or some other oil reservoir. With crude or with refined oil in such use, and flowing, as it must be, to keep a constant blaze going, these are elements enough for a possible accident. There are some suggestions for using gas in furnaces and stoves, in about the same way gas grates are operated. In the grates, however, there is always an abundance of ventilation, but in furnaces and closed stoves, there would come a risk of explosion. In accommodating a new apparatus to the present stoves and furnaces there is always the usual danger of putting things of this nature to uses they were not intended or constructed for. The danger apprehended from a continued use of soft coal is more easily understood, because it is to be found in the almost unavoidable fouling of pipes and chimnies with a soot that is inflammable under a strong draught, say on a windy day. It is very certain that frequent cleaning of pipes and chimnies will be necessary, and all this implies workmen about places more than ordinarily. Lastly, wood, as a fuel, will enter more largely into household consumption. This means quick fires and sudden, often intense, heat for a time. It is because people have long been unaccustomed to use these different kinds of fuel that the likelihood of small fires occurring is to be feared. To sum up, it is not unlikely that there will be found an increase in the fire losses in dwelling risks this winter, and so the possibility of the extra hazard, and, indeed, the whole matter referred to, ought to be worthy of consideration and treatment at the hands of the underwriters.

Our grand new hotel approaches completion, and in a few weeks, when out of the builders' hands, will be ready for rating as an annual risk. Ideas as to the correct rate vary considerably as might be expected. As low as fifty cents per cent. per year, and as high as one per cent. have been suggested. It is certain that a high-pitched co-insurance clause will be part of the contract, so as to enable all the leaders to have a slice of the insurance.

The secretary of the Toronto Board is getting ready to inspect the items and revise the rates of the Civic Insurance Schedule. The city insurance falls due for renewal about the 8th of January next, and as there is generally a lot of discussion, not to mention wire-pulling, over this little business, the secretary desires to get well ahead with his share of the work. There is a regular little colony of buildings under civic control, and the inspection and rating of these, together with the new erections in Exhibition Park, will take up considerable time. It is expected that the average rate of premium on the City Insurance will be higher than formerly.

Not long since the first meeting of the Trustees of the recently raised Firemen's Benefit Fund was held and action taken towards paying the beneficiaries under it, these being the widows and orphans of the firemen who gallantly fell whilst in the discharge of their duty. The President of the Toronto Board of Fire Underwriters and his successors in office, have a seat at the meetings of Trustees, having been duly elected thereto by the proper authority. This election was made because it was believed the thirty and more companies in the Board membership would follow the lead of two of their fellow-numbers, and with a like liberality contribute openly to the Firemen's Fund. Seemingly, these other companies preferred sending their contributions anonymously for some reason best known to themselves. They have, of course, acted within their rights, but it seems sad that the President of the Toronto Board, when exercising his function as a joint Trustee of the Relief

Fund, can never feel quite sure just what sized contribution from the Fire Insurance Companies he stands for. He may even have a successor, who might feel diffident about taking his seat, under the circumstances.

Yours,

ARIEL.

TORONTO, 7th October, 1902.

LONDON LETTER.

FINANCE.

LONDON, Sept. 25, 1902.

It is generally agreed that the monetary position is the great dominant factor in the stock markets at present. This is largely owing to fears of development in the United States and to the impression that there is a growing scarcity of money here. Affairs generally take their colour from these apprehensions, and the decrease in speculation becomes more and more pronounced. Trade, generally, is inactive, and the condition of things is approximating to a very dangerous slump.

The revenue of the government is still very much behind the regular expenditure. For example, the last return of the public accounts showed a revenue of \$13,750,000, nearly 15 per cent. of which came from exceptional sources, whilst the outgo was no less than \$19,750,000.

On October 9 the last instalment (20 per cent.), on the new Consols' issue becomes payable by the holders of the stock, and the total cash proceeds of that loan will have been \$149,600,000.

Consols, by the way, continue their insistent and persistent fall, and amongst the many reasons advanced for this sensational relapse, a good place may be given to the one advanced by the "Statist," viz., the unwise manner in which funds were borrowed to finance the war.

A comparison of dividends paid for the completed twelve months ending with June, shows that the highest paid was the 7½ per cent. of the little Barry Railway, whilst twelve stocks paid nothing at all. The lowest annual distribution actually made was that of the Hull and Barnsley, at ¾ per cent. Taking the real yield at these rates and at present market prices of the stock, the highest is found to be that of the Taff Vale, whose yield works out at 4 13-20 per cent. The lowest yield is that of the Hull and Barnsley, 1 7-10 per cent.

Excessive diligence in imposing the income tax may always be looked for in times when the government is "hard up" and so it is not surprising that certain great gold and diamond mining companies dealt in regularly here, and with most of their shareholders living here, but which companies themselves are domiciled in South Africa, have been served with a demand for income tax on their entire profit for the last two years. This is a demand for over a million dollars, and it will not go through without a vast amount of serious opposition. Before, at various times, the Inland Revenue authorities have endeavoured to levy the tax on companies really domiciled abroad, and in such case have been defeated.

A mining engineer of reputation (the additional are necessary in these days of the bogus mining expert), has given Renter's agent, at Johannesburg, particulars of a new gold discovery. The gentleman in question, Mr. Rathbone, was inspector of mines under President Kruger, and, not being found pliable enough by the Hollander "clique," was forced to resign. He is now back in the country he knows so well, and asserts that this new main reef formation extends 20 miles, and can be mined through inexpensive tunnels.

INSURANCE.

We have to welcome to our shores another Canadian assurance office, the Canada Life Assurance Company. The British manager, Alexander Duguid Cheyne, has already