

The area of this turbulent country is 403,620 square miles, of which one-half is forest. The principal product is coffee, of which it exports about \$12,000,000 yearly. The total exports range from 16 to 17 millions of dollars, consisting of coffee, cocoa, copper and tropical products.

The imports are from 12 to 15 millions, largely British, consisting mainly of cotton and linen goods. Public debt, "interior" and "foreign," amounts to \$40,000,000. The interest in the public debt which bears 6 per cent. interest, has always been difficult to collect, on large portions indeed it has been in arrear for many years. The revenue varies from 6 to 7 millions of dollars, which is largely wasted over the army and navy, which, though costly, are useless, though the army is popular as a means of finding positions for politicians, who are revolutionists, or ex-revolutionists to a man.

The Government is carried on by a President, Vice-President, two Houses of Congress, one, the Senate, being elected by provincial assemblies, and the House of Representatives, by popular vote, indeed, all public officials are elected by universal suffrage. The population by latest returns, was 2,100,000. The great political point at issue, over which revolutions are constantly occurring, is as to the respective powers of the central government and the powers of the several states or provinces, a question we are familiar with in Canada. During the whole of 1902 Venezuela was in a state of revolutionary ferment. On this day a year ago Germany made a formal demand on the President respecting her claims. On the 24th January there was trouble with France. On the 20th June the insurgents captured 1,740 of the Government troops after fighting five hours. On the 21st August the Venezuelan Government sent a very saucy message to Great Britain, Germany and France. On the 11th September the insurgents won another victory over Castro's forces, and a month later the national government vacated the capital from fear of being captured. The proceedings since then have been fully detailed. Considering the respective resources of the powers dealing with Venezuela, the contest has been like a chapter from a comic opera. The debts of this State are enormously in excess of its resources, as arrears have accumulated for years. It is high time that once and for all, the people were compelled to settle down in peace and be compelled to so conduct their industries and commerce as to enable them to meet their financial obligations as is done by civilized countries.

TO CLOSE POST OFFICE AGAINST WILD-CATS.—The United States postal authorities are taking steps to prevent the mails being used by wild-cat companies.

#### FIRE INSURANCE PREMIUMS IN MONTREAL.

From the annual returns to the city authorities of Montreal by the fire insurance companies of net premium income for purposes of taxation we give below the amount of city premiums for 1900 and 1901. In the latter year the losses sustained by the companies in Montreal city were nearly \$3,500,000. Several large fires having occurred, notably the Board of Trade building, T. May & Co., Leeming, Miles & Co., Montreal Cold Storage, etc.

Company.	1901. Insurance.	1900. Insurance.
Aetna.....	\$27,901 04	\$23,203 40
Alliance.....	46,082 48	39,014 33
Atlas.....	53,851 00	46,317 15
British America.....	40,342 10	28,697 94
Caledonian.....	44,034 22	35,862 29
Commercial Union.....	62,034 44	41,662 56
Guardian.....	74,232 28	57,574 51
Hartford.....	23,319 45	27,892 65
Imperial.....	46,734 83	39,107 31
London Mutual.....	31,521 86	1,725 00
Law Union & Crown.....	4,109 77	3,340 90
Liverpool & L. & G.....	66,882 17	53,752 88
London and Lancashire.....	30,313 45	23,606 35
London Assurance.....	35,157 23	24 343 44
Manchester.....	21,825 06	22,092 73
Montreal Mutual.....	87,345 90	38,209 27
National of Ireland.....	47,986 95	19,681 03
North America.....	40,544 69	28,250 78
North British and Mer.....	97,132 19	83,383 07
Northern.....	48,930 42	40,267 88
Norwich Union.....	32,760 00	28,596 00
Ottawa.....	24,702 61	19,558 26
Phenix of Brooklyn.....	16,815 58	7,875 49
Phenix of Hartford.....	17,335 54	11,329 75
Phenix of London.....	80,768 17	62,334 33
Quebec.....	8,806 67	6,897 95
Queen.....	54,962 00	36,340 00
Royal.....	188,088 00	140,279 00
Scottish Union & Nat.....	115,102 16	52,888 02
Sun.....	30,269 21	26,893 01
Union.....	48,329 96	37,237 82
Western.....	70,288 00	45,768 05
	\$1,600,509 43	\$1,133,983 61

#### THE METROPOLITAN FIRE INSURANCE CO.

The above is the new title given by an Order in Council to the Company heretofore known as the "Berlin Mutual Fire Insurance Company." It is a "Cash—Mutual and Stock" organization. The Directors considered that, as the Head Office had been removed from Berlin to Toronto, and its business was now spread over a wider territory than the original name implied, it was desirable to change the name. The authorized capital is \$500,000; the assets, 31st Dec., 1901, were \$51,488; and liabilities, including paid-up stock, \$35,461. Mr. F. Clemen Brown is Managing Director.

#### PERSONALS.

MR. NEELY, of the Ocean Accident, reports a slightly increased premium income for 1902.

MR. H. SUTHERLAND, of the Imperial Life, is at present in Jamaica, in connection with the business of his company.

MR. H. D. P. ARMSTRONG, Toronto, representing the Guardian Assurance Co. and Dominion Burglary, was in Montreal this week.

MR. GRIFFIN, of the Employers' Liability, reports a very satisfactory year's business with the largest premium income ever received in Canada.