

FIREMEN—THEIR SUSCEPTIBILITY TO PULMONARY DISEASES.

Dr. Thomas J. Mays, of the Philadelphia Polyclinic, has contributed an article to the *Medical and Surgical Reporter* on pulmonary consumption among firemen, which is of interest in view of the wide discussion in regard to the causes of that dread disease. The statistics which he presents have been obtained from the fire departments of the principal American cities, and seem to refute the argument as to contagious nature of consumption, and to show that there is a high death rate from the disease not only among those who are engaged in indoor occupations, but also among people who follow open-air pursuits.

Dr. Mays explains that firemen, when they enter a department, are subjected to no less severe a test than that which is applied to life-insurance risks, and that the two classes of men, therefore, occupy very much the same vantage ground in relation to health at the beginning of their respective careers. The death rate from consumption among the fire departments is 33.73 per cent. of all the causes of death, while the death rate from consumption among the insured is 17.61 per cent., which falls short 16.12 per cent. of the firemen's death rate from this disease. Dr. Mays says further that "the average mortality from consumption among the general population between the ages of 20 and 70, as founded on the statistics of a number of large American cities, is 27.29 per cent., which exceeds the death rate among the insured 9.68 per cent. Basing our estimates on the mortality of insured lives, we add 9.68 per cent. to 16.12 per cent., and this product, 25.80 per cent., represents the liability of the firemen to consumption over and above that of the general population. If we now add the latter to the death-rate of the general population, we get 53.09 per cent., which represents the relative death rate of firemen from consumption. In other words, if the whole adult population were turned into firemen 53.09 per cent. of all their deaths would be caused by consumption."

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH CO.

Some days ago the annual meeting of this large corporation was held. Its fiscal year ends, we believe, with June. Net earnings amounting to \$7,312,725 were shown in the report for the fiscal year 1890. This is an increase of more than one million dollars over the net earnings of the previous year. After paying interest and dividends the Western Union will have a surplus, according to the treasurer's report, of \$1,441,582. The aggregate dividends paid for the year amounted to \$4,956,000, or about six per cent. on its enormous capital of \$86,199,352.

In President Green's report to the stockholders he shows that the capital stock of the Western Union now amounts to \$86,190,852, of which \$26,242.93 is in the company's treasury. The bonded indebtedness of the company is \$14,779,500. Of the increased earnings the land lines yielded \$1,362,925, and the cable lines \$240,000. There was about \$43,000 increase in the amount realized from leased wires. The figures show that the company now has a total surplus of \$10,052,900.

In the course of the year 55,878,762 messages were sent over 678,997 miles of wire on 183,915 miles of poles. The average toll per message was 32.4 cents, against 31.2 cents in the previous year. No increase in the message rates has been made anywhere, and Dr. Green says that the increased rate per message is attributable to the fact that the greater part of the increased business consisted of long distance messages, which paid the highest rates.

The expenses of the company for the year were as follows: Operating and general expenses, \$10,863,063; rentals of leased lines, \$1,637,125; maintenance and reconstruction of lines, \$1,988,652; taxes, \$310,297; equipment of offices and wires, \$275,164; total expenses, \$15,074,303. The report says:

"The additions to plant during the year were 5,163 miles of line and cables, 31,300 miles of wire, and 912 new offices, at a cost of \$1,778,314, paid for out of the surplus earnings. There was expended for the purchase of stock of telegraph companies \$138,868, making the total cash expenditure for new property \$1,917,182."

The old board of directors was re-elected, with the exception that Charles F. Mayer, president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, was chosen to succeed John Jacob Astor.

THE WORLD'S STOCK OF DIAMONDS.

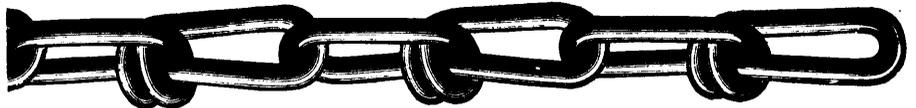
The *Boston Post* says: "The world's stock of diamonds has increased enormously in the last fifteen years. In 1876 the output of the African mines was about 1,500,000 carats, last year it was over 4,000,000 and the great 'trust' which control all the principal mines assert that they have 16,000,000 carats 'in sight' at the present time. Meantime the demand for diamonds has wonderfully increased, and they are higher to-day—partly because of the 'trust,' but also because of the increased demand—than they were a year or two ago. In one respect the diamond industry is different from almost all others. Its product—that is, of gems—is never 'consumed.' Of gold and silver a much larger amount than most people would believe is literally consumed in

arts past recovery, but a diamond once out goes into the world's great stock, and is liable to come upon the market at any time. Hence the world's annual taking of diamonds, which appears to be steadily increasing, even at advancing prices, is an index of how much of its surplus earnings it can afford to expend yearly in this particular form of luxury. The romance of diamond mining is all gone. It is now a matter of excavating vast beds of blue clay by machinery, washing it and sifting out the diamonds, which, after being roughly sorted for size, are sold in bulk by weight. The men who do the actual work are mere laborers, and their pay is proportionately small."

—Twenty dollar notes of the defunct Bank of Prince Edward are being circulated in Windsor, Ont.

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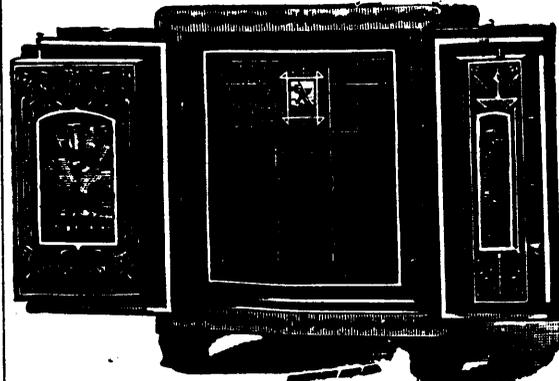
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