

**The Autocar,
A New Peril.**

As Montreal seems to be threatened with an attack of automobilism, let us look at France, to which country attention is always directed by the persons who talk about motor-cars. Late English papers report that France is getting a little sick of the new reign of terror, and that legislation is being called for, so that the highways may again be made passable for pedestrians and ordinary vehicles. The Departmental Council of Seine et Oise is stated to have passed a resolution prohibiting motor races and motors capable of exceeding a speed of eighteen miles an hour. It will not be necessary to pass any regulation to prevent the autocar fiend rushing along Canadian country roads at the speed mentioned. No one would care when his career was ended by angry pedestrians.

However, if motor-cars are to be introduced into Canada, we trust proper restrictions will be placed upon their owners, so that we may be spared the perils of the road hitherto borne so patiently by the people of the pleasant land of France.

**An Admirable
Atlas.**

Than geography, there is no more useful science. It treats of the world and its inhabitants, and it is a description of the physical structure of the earth. If we are in doubt about the actual progress made by the soldiers of the Queen in their march to Pretoria, we look at the map. Hence it is that every new atlas of the world is interesting as a study, and we congratulate the Canada Life Assurance Company on supplying business and professional men with a pocket atlas containing no less than forty-eight maps. The series covers the entire globe, special attention being given to the Dominion, and the maps are as much "up-to-date" as the methods of the company publishing same. We congratulate the Canada Life upon their advertising enterprise. Their atlas is an educational treat

**United States
Fire Record.**

Bad as the business of the fire companies in the United States was during 1899, the first four months of the closing year of the century discloses an infinitely worse record. From a table compiled by The "Standard" (Boston), giving the losses in forty States and Territories, we cull the following figures:—

	1900.	1899.
Grand totals for April	\$11,253,400	\$7,406,000
" " March. . . .	13,402,123	9,437,000
" " February	15,169,650	16,575,000
" " January	11,515,000	8,295,000
Grand total four months . .	\$51,340,173	\$41,713,000

Altogether, there is enough in this record of losses to depress the most cheerful of underwriters, and we are not surprised at the very general movement across the border to advance the rates on unprofitable classes, mercantile risks and special hazards.

**A
Dangerous Bill**

One of the most admirable clauses in the Canadian Bank Act is that by which loaning on real estate is forbidden. Yet some of our neighbors in the United States seem to be contemplating this radical deviation from sound banking principles. A certain General Grosvenor has introduced a bill giving to the National banks permission to make loans on real estate. As if cognizant that this would be a dangerous departure, the framers of the measure have inserted conditions to make it less objectionable than it otherwise would be. The property advanced upon must be in the State or Territory where the bank is domiciled, and worth double the amount of the loan. As an additional safeguard, a clause is inserted forbidding any bank from having more than 25 per cent. of its total loans placed on the security of real estate.

From whatever point of view this bill may be regarded, it is most objectionable, and, although there is said to be a large agricultural interest in favor of its passage, we trust the good sense of the nation will prevent it. With the number of banks being established under the new currency law, it is easy to foresee the possibility of many of them doing a booming business with farmers and others—for a brief period.

**He Insisted
on Insurance.**

An action having much romantic interest was recently brought by a mining engineer, named Kerry, against Streeter, the celebrated London dealer in precious stones. It seems that the latter obtained a concession from the Egyptian Government to work an emerald mine somewhere on the shores of the Red Sea. Wishing to send out an expedition to explore the mine, he consulted the engineer, and in August last entered into an agreement whereby Kerry was to proceed with six gentlemen in his schooner yacht "Ariadne" to the Red Sea, and open up the hidden treasure. For the use of his yacht and his services, Kerry said he was to receive \$350 a week for a period of at least thirteen weeks, and a \$2,500 share in a syndicate formed to work the concession. The contract was not carried out, and, although Mr. Streeter contended that the negotiations fell through owing to the plaintiff insisting that his yacht should be insured for \$125,000, the jury found a verdict for Kerry for \$3,000 with costs, as a recompense to him for the loss of his prospective profit on the voyage and the value of his share in the syndicate.

That the "Ariadne" should be insured by her charterer would appear to have been a reasonable contention on the part of the mining engineer, and the special jury evidently placed a very proper value on insurance as a safeguard against financial loss and as a provision for the perils of the deep.