

NEW AND BRILLIANT SCHEME OF AN ENGLISH

ACCIDENT CO
N. Y. Times.

There is a new thing in insurance. It was supposed that the limit of new schemes for enabling people to grow rich by insuring their lives had been reached by the ingenious American companies that undertake to pay a man \$100,000 on his ninety-first birthday, provided he pays the company \$5 annually and receives, say, \$7 a year in dividends. However, an English accident insurance company has really invented a new scheme, that of insuring particular limbs and organs against accident. According to the usual system, a man who takes out a policy in an accident insurance company wins something every time he is accidentally hurt to an extent that injures him financially. If he breaks his leg or puts out his eye, or is shaken up by railway collision, the insurance company promptly pays him. A little reflection will show, however, that certain people are more liable than others to a special class of accidents. A bicyclist, for example, is in no danger of being blown up in a steamboat, but he is peculiarly liable to break his legs, a summer boarder in the country is in no danger of being run over by a locomotive, but he is exposed to the imminent risk of injuring his stomach by partaking of the luxuries of a plain farmers table. Why, then, should an insurance company insure the bicyclist, the summer boarder and the habitual traveller at the same rate and against the same dangers? The English company to which reference has been made permits a person to insure just as much of himself as he wants to insure. It does not divide its patrons into classes according to their age or business, but it regards them merely as a collection of organs and limbs, and has its fixed rate for insuring each limb and each organ. It classes legs as extra-hazardous and charges a high premium for insuring either right or left leg. It insures arms at a lower rate and fingers at a still lower rate. The premium for insuring either eye for £1,000 is 1s. per annum, and a like policy taken out on a single rib costs only 2d. per year. A man can cover his stomach with a policy insuring him against any distinctively stomachic disease or accident for 2s. per £1,000, unless he lives at a boarding-house, in which case the company will take no risk whatever upon any one of his digestive organs. Lungs can be insured for 18d. each, and a heart policy costs only 6d. Teeth and hair are not insurable at any price, for the obvious reason that to issue policies upon teeth and hair would open a way for extensive frauds on the part of persons anxious to defraud the company. This system has now been in operation for two years, and has worked well. Both the company and its patrons seem to be well satisfied, and the little handbook issued by the company is filled with records of accidents that have happened to insured persons. For example a travelling salesman who insured his right cheek for £50,000 for a premium of £5 was struck the very next day on the cheek by an experimental shot fired from a 100-ton gun in process of testing, and the cheek was so unmistakably injured that the company paid the £50,000 without an hour's delay. Also a young man who had taken out a policy on his left ear for £25,000, at a premium of only 5s, went within a week thereafter to a Wagner concert and returned with his left ear damaged to such an extent that the company paid him £20,000 as a compromise—his physicians admitted that the injured ear would probably recover. Six bicyclists received in the course of two years no less than £80,000 for broken legs—the six having broken in all twenty legs, and having paid in the aggregate as premiums only £10. These facts show what a beneficent thing the new system of insurance promises to be.

PECULIAR INSURANCE.

Chicago Argus.

The case of the Argus Life Assurance Co. of England, is a very peculiar one. For many years this company, for some reason or other best known to its directors, has ceased to do new business. Many companies have entered into negotiations to re-insure all the risks of the company, but without success, as the directors of the Argus Life Assurance Co. have always offered too small an amount to effect a sale. In the report of the company for the year 1883 the company shows naturally more outgo than income, but the valuations of its policies is enough less to more than make up the difference. While the valuation is not made net yet, the new actuaries' table of mortality is used with five per cent. interest. An allowance more than ample to take care of the expenses is thrown off the premiums when their present value is computed, which, for the custom in England, makes the valuation quite severe. It is thought that the company can continue to carry its business and at the end have a surplus left, but it is rather a dangerous experiment when the lives are few and the company should either enter the field for new business or re-insure.

INSURANCE, SWINDLERS CAUGHT.—PHILADELPHIA, January 3.—H. E. Pennypacker, agent of the Fidelity Mutual Association of Philadelphia, and Augustus Richey, a well-known wealthy citizen of Carlisle, Pa., were arrested today on a charge of conspiracy to defraud the association. The prisoners with connivance of a physician of Carlisle procured insurance in the company for \$50,000 on a young man named Whortley, who was in bad health. Whortley was induced to transfer his interest in the policy to Richey, who has paid a assessment. Whortley says he has been offered a large sum to go away and Allen Richey and Pennypacker to procure a corpse which would be represented as Whortley's, the conspirators being able to obtain the amount of the insurance. Whortley refused and fearing bodily injury notified the company of the conspiracy. It is said Richey has been successful in similar practices.

CLEARING-HOUSE ASSOCIATION.

To the Editor of the Mail.

Sir,—Apropos of the interesting letter in your issue of the 30th ultimo, from Mr. Walter Durling, in reference to clearing-house, allow me to call attention to the valuable service rendered by the Clearing-House Association of New York to bankers in particular, and the community in general, at the time of the panic in May last in that city, as stated in the twenty-second annual report of the comptroller of the currency. After the failure of the Marine National Bank on the 6th May, and the suspension of the Metropolitan National Bank on the 14th, with several heavy failures of private bankers and brokers about that time, the members of the Clearing-House Association foreseeing that the immediate result would be a demand for deposits by their country correspondents and the public, called a meeting on the afternoon of the last-mentioned date, and adopted the following resolution:—

"Resolved, That, in view of this crisis, the banks in this association, for the purpose of sustaining each other and the business community, resolve that a committee of five be appointed by the chair to receive from banks members of the association bills receivable and other securities, to be approved by said committee, who shall be authorized to issue therefor to such depositing banks certificates of deposit, bearing interest at six per cent. per annum, not in excess of 75 per cent. of the securities or bills receivable so deposited, except in case of United States bonds, and said certificates shall be received in settlement of balances at the Clearing-House."

The eighty-two clearing banks immediately availed themselves of this arrangement, and on May 24 there were \$21,885,000 of these certificates outstanding, the largest amount on any one day, the total amount being \$24,916,000. These had all been returned, cancelled, and the securities taken up by the 1st July, with the exception of a portion which was issued to the Metropolitan National Bank. It is obvious that the necessity to meet those large payments—which would have required to have been settled in gold, or its substitute, legal tender notes, had no such arrangements been entered into by the associated banks—would have had the effect of prolonging and aggravating the panic, as the banks, in order to make provision for these and outside demands, would have been obliged to realize on their immediately available assets, or in other words to collect their loans on call, and as all securities were at this time very much depressed, and almost unsaleable, borrowers would have been obliged to dispose of them at a ruinous sacrifice, in order to meet the demands of the banks, and the result would certainly have been an addition to the already long list of failures, and probably in the long run have resulted in a general suspension of gold and currency payments throughout the country. This was, however, avoided by the judicious action of the Clearing-House Association—Yours, etc., W. Georgetown, Jan. 2, 1885.

THE NEW YORK STOCK MARKET.

New York Daily Indicator.

Our stock market throughout the year has been depressed, and prices have declined. The number of shares of stock sold during the year was only 95,667,668, against 96,500,000 in 1883, 116,700,000 in 1882, 117,000,000 in 1881, and 97,000,000 in 1880. The value of State and railroad bonds dealt in amounted to \$502,782,100, against \$290,000,000 in 1883, \$275,000,000 in 1882, \$447,000,000 in 1881, and \$585,000,000 in 1880. The sales of Government bonds aggregated \$14,905,150, against \$17,000,000 in 1883, \$18,500,000 in 1882, \$35,500,000 in 1881, and \$58,500,000 in 1880. The sales of stocks in 1884 were nearly 1,000,000 shares less than in 1883, and 21,000,000 shares less than in 1881 or 1882, a falling off from those years of nearly 30 per cent. There has been a large increase, however, in sales of railroad and State bonds as compared with 1883, but a decrease of over \$82,000,000 as compared with 1880. The sales of Government bonds were \$2,000,000 less than in 1883, and \$43,600,000 less than in 1880.

The average price of forty leading stocks at the close of 1883 was 69½. The closing prices of the same stocks in January was 70½, in February 70½, in March 68, in April 64½, in May 58½, in June 52½, in July 62, in August 61½, in September 59½, in October 55½, in November 57½, and in December 52½. The average at the close of the year was nearly as low as at the close of any month in the year, and reflects a decline of 16½ per cent. as compared with the close of 1883. In a number of stocks the decline during the year has been enormous, while the fluctuations in several have been as much as 40 to 50 per cent. The most notable decline was in Bankers & Merchants' Telegraph, which dropped from 127½ to 1 per cent.

A HORRIBLE SIGHT.—CHICAGO, Jan. 3.—While engaged in the search for the remains of the five victims of the recent tug explosion, a crowd gathered about the spot where the mangled remains of Fir man Borne were picked up. Glancing up at the side of the tall grain elevator they were startled to see, pressed in blood on the slate, a perfect outline of a human form, with the hands spread apart and held high above the head. The impress of the face, body, and legs were on the side of the great building nearly fifty feet above the dock level, and it was evident that Borne had been projected from the tug up against the elevator wall, dropping back, crushed horribly to the dock below. Many of the crowd were completely unnerved by the sight.

THE MANIAC GAUL.—Le Paris says "1884 has been a year of glory for the French army and navy, and Tonquin, Formosa and Formosa are points of departure of a new era. The colonial events of 1884 will cause the abasement of pretentious England and the revenge of France."

PAUPERS FOR SALE IN CANADA!

New Brunswick Paper.

Years ago the custom of farming out the poor, as it is technically called, was very common in different parts of the Province. During the last twenty years the custom has gradually died out and now there are comparatively few places where it exists. Two or three days ago, the people of Sussex were disgusted to find the following notice posted in conspicuous places about the village:—

NOTICE

The Board, Lodging and Clothing of Bernard McCann, Hannah Boles, Martin Condon, and John McLaughlin, paupers, will be let to the lowest approved bidder for a period of time on Wednesday, the 31st December instant, at the Railway Station, at 2 o'clock, p.m.

[Signed]

W. H. WHITE,
JOSEPH BREKER,
R. A. HAGGARTY,Overseers
of the
Poor.

Sussex, K.C., December 21st, 1884

The overseers of the poor, whose names are appended to this notice, are understood to be all opposed to the present system, but they are limited to the carrying out of the law.

According to the terms of the notice the sale took place at the railway station at two o'clock on Wednesday. Long before that hour a number of persons gathered around the station and discussed the coming event, some of them much as they would the sale of a cow. A few of the better thinking part of the crowd expressed their disgust in very strong language. The crowd continued to grow in numbers, and when Mr. W. H. White announced that the sale would begin, between fifty and one hundred persons including boys and young men, were standing about the station.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. White, when he had finished reading the above notice, "disposing of the poor in this way is a hard and unpleasant duty for the overseers of the poor to perform. It is a stigma which has already lasted too long on the people of Kings county and should be removed as soon as possible, and I hope this is the last notice of the kind that will be posted in Sussex. The more I think of the present method of maintaining the poor the worse the system appears, and if you gentlemen would walk around with us among the poor and see how they live, rather than become a burden on the parish to be disposed of at public auction you would realize more fully the sense of shame I feel this afternoon." Mr. White related some of his experiences among the poor which were calculated to move a heart of steel. He then stated that he would sell the board, lodging and clothing of Bernard McCann, a pauper, for twelve months, with the understanding that the contract could be set aside if an almshouse were provided and in case of the death of the pauper. "Now, gentlemen," said he, "I am not going to cry the bids. Those of you who wish to make offers can do so. What will you board Bernard McCann for?"

"Ninety dollars," responded John Orr.

"Are there any other bidders?" enquired Mr. White.

"If not, we will accept Mr. Orr's offer."

There was no other bids, and the offer was accepted.

"Hannah Boles is the next name on the list. Do any of you want to make an offer to provide her with board, lodging, and clothing? Speak out!"

There was no offers, and it was announced that she would continue to remain with Isaac Trenton, who undertakes to provide her with the necessaries above mentioned for \$72 a year.

Martin Condon was not offered at auction, and the last name on the list, John McLaughlin, was read. "He is sold under the condition that he will do any work he is able to do. What will you keep him for?"

"Two dollars a week," said Joseph Donnelly, "and any of you who want him for less than that can have him."

This remark caused a laugh among the crowd but the bidding went on. "Seventy-two dollars" came from the back of the crowd. "Seventy-one," quickly responded Donnelly.

"Sixty-five," said a voice, the owner of which could not be ascertained by the reporter.

"Sixty-four fifty," responded Donnelly, and this being the lowest bid, was accepted and the sale closed.

"Disgraceful," said one of the auditors. "They got good prices," said another. "Cheaper for the county to build an almshouse," said a third. And then the crowd filed out of the station, one of them breaking a pane of glass as he passed a window.

OVERHEAD WIRES.

Overhead telegraph wires are as much opposed in England as they are in the United States. The Imperial Government purposes to appoint a commission to suggest a method of dealing with them. Already several American cities have ordered that they be removed, and that underground wires be substituted for them. Hitherto there have been serious doubts as to the possibility of working the wires underground, but Sir William Thompson has set these at rest. That distinguished electrician's opinion has been sought upon two questions: "Whether a telegraphic system could be worked rapidly and efficiently through underground lines, and whether these lines would be durable." Both of these questions Sir William answers in the affirmative, and sustains his conclusions by an interesting train of reasoning based upon actual experiments. He recommends a cable containing copper strands insulated with gutta serena, and sheathed with iron wires protected by jute and compound. These cables are in extensive use by the German Government with good results. In London an underground cable twenty-seven miles long has been found to have a capacity of 220 words per minute, and one of 181 miles in length 135 words a minute.