

tion to policyholders which they could not secure for themselves." The act was consequently declared constitutional and the verdict against the agent for "the crime of unlawfully paying and allowing a rebate of premium upon a life insurance policy," was confirmed. The Honourable James F. Pierce, who favours us with a copy of above decision, appends a copy of a letter written by him in 1895, informing an inquirer that "it may be said with safety that a contract which was negotiated in violation of law, and where the negotiation thereof constituted a misdemeanour, would be held by our Courts invalid." Rebating is held to be a misdemeanour by the law of New York State, therefore it invalidates all contracts into the negotiation which rebating has entered.

TRAVELERS' INSURANCE COMPANY.

Announcement is made of the promotion of Mr. F. F. Parkins to the position of manager of the Dominion of Canada for the above Company. Mr. Parkins has been connected with the Travelers since 1892, as their Chief Agent for the Province of Quebec, during which time, owing to the success attending his devotion and loyalty to the Company's interests, they decided to employ his abilities in a larger field. Mr. Parkins is well known in insurance circles in Montreal, where he has made hosts of friends, on whose behalf we wish him every success in his enlarged duties and responsibilities, which we have no doubt will result favourably for the Travelers.

PROMINENT TOPICS.

The Ontario Legislature was opened on 10th inst. by Chief Justice Moss, in the much-regretted absence of Sir Oliver Mowat from indisposition. The so-called "Speech from the Throne," which is a misnomer, was unusually lengthy and void of special interest. The topics were an increase in number of settlers on Crown lands; distribution of land grants for military services; large development of mining and lumber industries; agricultural prosperity; need for legislation re contagious diseases; the care of the insane and of destitute children; progress of technical education; report on construction of Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway; a measure to be introduced to restrict the liquor traffic. These topics will find material for a number of bills that will keep the members in talking material for the Session, and, as the majority of the Government is so small, will no doubt excite some lively debates and exciting divisions.

The defeat of the ex-Finance Minister, the Hon. Mr. Foster, who was a candidate for North Ontario

is regretted by many of his political opponents, who admit that the place of one of his ability and experience is the House of Commons. The interests of the country demand that the Opposition should, be led by men of higher than average ability, knowledge of Parliamentary life, and high character. One of the special needs of the House is men of financial talent on both sides, who can handle fiscal questions with such statesmanlike breadth and knowledge as to command the serious attention and respect of the whole assembly and of the business community generally.

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While the steamer "Montreal" was blazing on Saturday night last a crowd of men and boys climbed upon the skeleton roof of a large wharf shed to view the spectacle. The police had done their utmost to stop them perching in such a dangerous place, but they were overpowered. Suddenly the rafters and beams gave way bringing down several scores of the over venturesome sight-seers, who were using the roof as a "coign of vantage." One man was instantly killed, over fifty were injured, some dangerously; the victims were crushed by the timbers or lay under their bleeding and groaning companions in misery unable to rise. The hospitals were quickly crowded with the sufferers and hundreds of families thrown into distressing anxiety, as so many men and boys were missing owing to their being injured or kept late on the streets from excitement. The tragedy should be a warning against trespassing upon private property and refusing to take heed to the orders of the police.

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Late in the fall of last year the unfinished steamer "Montreal," which for a length of time had been under construction for the Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Company, was brought to this port en route to Sorel, where it was arranged to be finished. While there, owing to some labour disputes, it was found desirable to carry on the work needed for completing the vessel at Montreal. She was accordingly moored off the Alexander wharf and a number of workmen were engaged in giving the finishing touches to what would have been the largest and handsomest steamer of the Company's fleet. Between 8 and 9 p. m., on 7th inst., fire was found to have broken out on board. Owing to the Harbour being blocked as a protection against flood, the fire brigade found it impossible to do any effective work in subduing the flames which alarmed the whole city.

The vessel was doomed from the first. It now lies a "shere hulk" in the dock, from one to two hours having destroyed the work of over two years, and caused a loss of about \$400,000. The vessel had not been handed over to the Richelieu Company by the