

could be made either compulsory or optional, through the municipalities. If optional, the different municipalities could elect whether or not to come under the plan, and share in the benefits to be derived from the protection thus afforded. One would suppose that there would hardly be a farmer in the province who would not willingly submit to such a tax in view of the protection which it would afford him. While we do not favor this or any other insurance business being undertaken by municipalities, we regard it as very desirable for so serious a risk to be provided against. Our contemporary being at the spot is favorably situated to investigate the question, and would do well to ascertain as far as possible what the losses by hail are on an average covering a number of years. If this form of agricultural risk is not written in Manitoba, as it is in Great Britain and France, by some company, the data we suggest being collected would probably tempt some underwriters to operate in this field, as they certainly would if it offered a fair prospect of profit.

Mr. George A. Cox,
and the Senate.

WE trust the rumor of the elevation of Mr. Geo. A. Cox to the Senate will prove well founded. His accession to the Senate would give that body what it very much needs, which is a thorough financial expert of wide business experience outside the political sphere. Although there are some very able men in Parliament who have had considerable experience with matters of governmental finance, there is a dearth of members in both houses who have a practical knowledge of business finance. As there seems some difficulty in filling the office of Minister of the Interior, it would be an admirable stroke of wisdom to give that position to Mr. Cox, who would add great strength to the Cabinet, and be the strongest proof possible of Mr. Laurier's anxiety to carry on the business of the country on business principles, as he very wisely declared would be his policy.

Mr. Cox having had a very extensive acquaintance with mercantile operations, with the management also of one of our largest banks, and life assurance companies, as well as an intimate familiarity with the business of a mortgage loan company, is pre-eminently equipped for doing highly valuable service to the State as a member of the Senate.

A Terrible
Indictment.

IN a recent CHRONICLE we corrected some statements in regard to the finances of Canada, which by some inadvertence, no doubt, had crept into an article published by our valued contemporary *Banking & Insurance*. Errors of this class, reflecting as they did upon the credit of Canada, we allow to pass when found in an obscure newspaper. But when a journal of the high standing of our Scotch contemporary circulates erroneous statistics, and draws conclusions therefrom which are injurious to Canada, and highly irritating to Canadians, we esteem it our duty to correct such misleading statements, and to protect against the comments based thereon. Our contemporary considers

that in defending our country by correcting his figures we were guilty of conduct bordering on profanity. It is certainly enough to make the calmest Canadian indulge in suppurous language when he reads such attacks on this Dominion as appear occasionally in British journals, attacks which are inspired from this side by political pessimists. But, with all deference to our contemporary, we do not regard any British journal so sacred as to justify a charge of profanity being made against those who criticize its mistakes and lack of knowledge.

WHAT THE STATE OWES TO LIFE INSURANCE.

Much has been said and well said of life insurance as a builder and maintainer of the home. Its protective features to the individual or to the family have formed the pertinent theme alike of the solicitor, the life insurance essayist and the novelist. Its beneficence has engaged the pencil of the artist, and even poetry has embalmed its virtues in lasting musical numbers. The joy which has daily come to thousands of bereaved and otherwise helpless widows and the beneficence of its sheltering arms encircling tens of thousands of orphans have been eloquently, but not too eloquently, portrayed, and have formed the climax of appeal to the careless or indifferent husband and father. The highest types of civilization mark the growth of the life insurance idea, and in free and progressive England and America more than anywhere else in all the world have men and women accepted heartily and appropriated well nigh universally the mission of protection which for more than a hundred and fifty years this beneficent institution has proclaimed.

There is, however, an important phase of life insurance which has received scant attention, and yet which is of the greatest importance to a high order of statecraft. The true function of government is to encourage everything among its subjects which is right and just, and to prohibit everything which is wrong and injurious; which is only a brief way of saying that it should be the care of the State to foster directly and indirectly whatever tends to elevate intellectually and morally the standard of citizenship, such elevation necessarily working silently but with potency to prevent ignorance and its legitimate offspring—depravity. The parents of crime are, in a large sense, ignorance and indolence, both the offspring of want. Those communities that are noted for thrift are also everywhere noted for good citizenship, and so well have social economists and philanthropists understood this fundamental truth that they have worked persistently to at the same time educate the head and to train the hand of the poor and viciously inclined, by taking them out of their environments and placing them under the example and within reach of the opportunities belonging to self-respecting thrift. A bad soil makes bad citizens, and both the dependent and the criminal classes are the product of that weed-producing soil which we call abject poverty. We hold that there is no agency at work in society, christianity excepted, which constitutes such a powerful factor for the