

The Price. The cost of maintaining the sovereign rights of Great Britain in South Africa is not likely to be forgotten in the homes of the United Kingdom for many a long day. The correspondent of "The Post" has prepared a table showing the ghastly figures for the battle of Elandslaagte. The Gordon Highlanders went into action 500 strong, and lost 108 killed and wounded, being one man in five. The Manchester regiment, 500 strong, lost in killed and wounded 42, being one in twelve. The Imperial Light Horse went into action 1,000 strong, and lost 52 in killed and wounded, one in nineteen. The Devon regiment went in 1,000 strong, and lost in killed and wounded 33, one in thirty.

However, the resolution of Great Britain to become, without possibility of further debate, the paramount power in South Africa is not likely to be changed by considerations of the price paid for victory.

British Officers and Life Insurance Companies Lord Methuen, one of General Buller's staff of officers now serving in the Transvaal, having written to the London "Times," calling attention to the extra premium of five guineas per cent. on his life insurance during his absence in South Africa, the Insurance "Observer" very properly remarks that Lord Methuen's letter "raises a question about which there has probably been a great deal more thinking than talking." The courage and sentiment which prompts British officers to stand erect in the open when their men are under cover and comfortably blazing away at the enemy is admirable; but we find it impossible to say aught against the life companies' common-sense view of the matter. The extra charge seems to be quite moderate, when we reflect upon the results of two battles fought since Lord Methuen wrote his letter to the "Times." An angry Boer is not likely to hesitate about shooting a brave young subaltern or a distinguished staff officer simply out of respect for a system which leaves him, when all around are under cover, looming up like a lighthouse in a fog.

Doubtless, when Lord Methuen and his gallant comrades consent to some concession which seems to assure the companies that British officers will, under such circumstances as those narrated of Glencoe, take reasonable care of themselves, the necessity for that extra premium will cease to exist.

In the course of some comments upon the action of the life insurance companies, "The Review" says the rate is rather high, and then expresses the opinion that if one officer in fifty is hit it will be good cause for astonishment. However, possibly the news from South Africa has since astonished our British contemporary.

Curious Outcome of Banking Competition.

In our frequent references to the wisdom of a consolidation of banking interests in Canada, as a means of lessening the severity of a competition which is the constant subject of discussion, we have

hitherto avoided touching upon the occasional instances coming within our notice of the system adopted by some Canadian banks whereby they obtain the services of experienced clerks and managers supposed to have the control of a certain amount of business hitherto held by other banks. Fortunately, the leading banks in Canada almost unanimously adhere to the practice of promoting their own men in order of seniority, thus making their officials contented even if the expected promotion seems unreasonably slow in coming. But competition among the English banks has developed a curious condition of things.

"There are very strong objections," says the Manchester "Courier," and we quite agree with its remarks, "to the agreement which certain of the leading banks require the members of their staff to sign with reference to their disposal of their services if they should leave the bank. A man is required to enter into a pledge that he will not, within two years of leaving the bank, be engaged as manager or clerk in any other bank within a radius of 10 miles. If he does, he is to pay the bank £1,000 as liquidated damages, without prejudice to the bank's right to adopt other measures in the matter. In plain English, a man who may be unreasonably discharged by the bank, or who chooses to leave its service, is to be prevented for two years from getting his living in the way in which he has always been accustomed to get it.

"We recognize to the full the increasing competition among the banks and the many difficulties with which they have to contend. But, until they pay their men decent salaries for the work they do, they have no right, legal or moral, to make the preposterous demands laid down in such an agreement as this. Naturally, most of the men sign it. If they did not, they would probably have a month's notice on the spot. All the same, however, we should like to see some organization among bank employees with a view to resisting such utterly unreasonable and unfair demands."

Keen as the competition among the financial institutions of the Dominion has become, we are at least free from any such harsh and tyrannical coercion of bank officials as that exposed by this English paper.

AN AMERICAN POST-OFFICE FOR THE PARIS SHOW.—One of the most interesting features of the Paris Exposition will be a model American post-office, which will be up to date in every respect. Arrangements have been made with the French postal authorities, when mails for Americans in Paris will be sent direct to this post-office instead of going through the regular channels. In this way three or four hours' time will be saved in the distribution of the mails. The idea was suggested by Commissioner General Peck, and is heartily endorsed by the department. A room about the size ordinarily used for a branch post-office will be fitted up with all modern postal appliances. Americans visiting Paris during the Exposition will be enabled to transact the ordinary business of the post-office in the way they are accustomed to do at home.—Washington Correspondence Philadelphia Press.