

subsequently married again. The second wife was a widow who, at the time the above policy was issued, was also married and her husband living. The insured died in June last, leaving as widow his second wife. The children of the first wife and the widow set up rival claims under the policy, the former on the ground that the words above quoted contemplated the then wife as the only possible widow, and the latter on the ground that she is *de facto* the widow of the assured, and as such clearly entitled to the money. To complicate matters, it appears that Phelon paid no premiums to keep the policy in force after his second marriage, the policy being kept in force to a period two months beyond the time of his death under the Massachusetts non-forfeiture law applying to this company. The company is ready to pay the proceeds of the policy into court, declaring itself unable to decide between the claimants. The decision will be awaited with interest.

THE WINDING UP of the Saugeen Mutual Fire insurance company of Mt. Forest, Ontario, which has been going on for several months, has developed a decision in the courts which will be very much of a wet blanket on members of these mutuals generally, as well as on the members of this company in particular. In order to evade the payment of assessments made, and also the payment of "preferred" notes, members set up in defence the mode of carrying on the business by the company, the division into classes, etc., but without avail. The Master in Chancery at Guelph has decided that not only must all these notes be paid, but that all assessments in arrears must also be paid. In other words, the members constitute the company and are individually liable for a portion of its losses, and must pay up. Perhaps some time people will learn that going into a mutual company involves serious liability, while, practically, membership entitles the individual to no voice in the actual management.

THE FACTS WHICH are patent to all intelligent observers fully justify the conclusion, that unless a decided improvement speedily takes place in the management of the water supply in Toronto, not only will the health of the people there be in constant peril, but the insurance companies will be justified in advancing rates to meet the obvious hazard. With pumping works entirely inadequate, when in order, to keep up a full supply of water, with numerous holes in the supply pipes neutralizing by leakage the efforts of the pumping power, with the pumps half filled with sand and the main engine breaking down suspiciously often, we don't wonder that the wide-awake portion of the citizens of our sister city are getting emphatic on the necessity of having something done by the city council. Possibly, through recent repairs and a spasm of vigilance, the immediate peril may have passed; but the authorities of Toronto must look the fact squarely in the face, that a water supply sufficient for such an emergency as is likely to occur in a city of nearly two hundred thousand people means a good deal more than can be predicated of the present appliances.

THE AFFAIRS OF the Star Fire of New York, which went into voluntary liquidation after 22 years of experience, reinsured its business and retired in 1886, is giving occasion for sundry sensational reports of late with regard to the whereabouts of its assets, reported at the close of 1889 at \$237,244. Mr. N. C. Miller, the president, was entrusted by the directors with the winding up of its affairs, and the above assets were in his charge. Mr. Miller is now and has for some time been engaged in business in Chicago, and maintains a studied silence regarding the whereabouts of the assets which were found missing recently from the safety deposit box where formerly kept in New York. His answer to all inquiries is that what he has to say will be said in court. Mr. Miller is presumably responsible, and doubtless the stockholders will get what they are entitled to. The former, it is said, has some claims which he intends to compel the latter to acknowledge. This apparently explains the would-be sensation.

THE BRILLIANT CAPACITY of the daily newspaper for blundering when it essays to deal with insurance matters, and the facility with which it steals whatever is reliable from the insurance journals, has become notorious. An instance of this latter cribbing propensity appeared recently in the columns of the *Chicago Tribune*, which printed, as original news from New York, a rehash of the information given by the *Chronicle* of that city in two different issues concerning the Ettinger matter—a secret system of reporting in advance to various companies by that individual where Jew fires were likely to occur. Not long since the *Toronto Globe* found a "mare's nest," in the fact that the life assurance companies of the Dominion lost by lapse and surrender nearly a million and three-quarters more assurance last year than they did the year before, deducing therefrom the startling conclusion that the business was in a bad way. It was oblivious of the collateral fact that the same companies also increased the amount of assurance in force by more than eleven millions! Then, again, recently the *Minneapolis Times* drew some ridiculous conclusions from the assertion that two-thirds of the fire loss of the country is due to incendiarism, ignorant of the fact that one-fifth the proportion named is a high estimate. Expert knowledge on the far-reaching subject of insurance is not provided for on the staff of the daily newspaper; while it is just that kind of knowledge that dominates the columns of the insurance press. The one is authority in its chosen field; the other jumbles facts and jumps at conclusions as a necessity of its limitations.

IN CONNECTION WITH the great fire at Salonica the *Standard* of London charges that the British companies, who are said to be losers to the extent of three-quarters of a million dollars, employed impecunious young Jews as agents, without inquiring of the consul there as to their fitness, and that these agents "would insure anything, even small huts made of sun-dried bricks covered with planks." It is to be hoped, as is probable, that this is largely newspaper exaggeration.