vessels arrived at port from sea and coastwise, and 117 vessels departed for foreign ports and coast wise. Their cargoes consisted of 3,519 cords hemlock bark; 123,398 sleepers for railway use, and other goods to the total value of $56,496 among which were grindstones, shipknees, boards and timber, destined for the United States.

"SUSPENDED MORTALITY."

A controversy has been going on for some time respecting certain Canadian Life Insurance Companies and their method ot working, in which a number of insurance people, here and elsewhere, are concerned, and in the course of which very bitter things have been said or threatened. If insurance managers get to be as free with the pen as their agents are with their tongues, especially upon the subject of the evils of other companies' methods and the merits of their own, the price of paper will rise. Such quarrels are unseemly; insurance men ought to be able to settle their differences at least as decorously as merchants do. Personalities, of the kind indulged in of late in this connection are not the likeliest means to convince the public; and if as much pains were taken to make clear the disputed points of administration, as to disparage competitors, some good might be done. We have taken the pains to look up one subject of difference between the high contending parties and find it to be the following:

The question of the proper course to take respecting the suspended mortality of a life company raised some time ago by the N. Y. *Insurance Times* is a most important one to all our companies. We may explain the meaning of the phrase thus: Suppose the mortality or death losses in a company in any year according to the rate expected by the Mortality Tables used, to be say $100,000 and the actual mortality only $50,000, the question is what should be done with the apparent gain from this source, of the difference of $50,000 or with whatever difference may thus arise, such difference being called suspended mortality. The position taken by the *Times* is that the greater part of this difference should be held in hand to provide for the future, when, according to all experience, the average actual loss will be close to the expected loss, or in other words no profits are made for the purpose of distribution from this source.

We find that the journal of the Institute of Actuaries of Great Britain, the highest scientific authority in the world upon such a matter, holds this view and lays down the rule "To ascertain the divisible surplus, deduction from the valuation surplus ought to be made for *suspended mortality*," or in other words the apparent gain from mortality should be deducted from the divisible surplus and held in hand. This is the British practice. The last British official Blue Book furnishes many examples of this practice. We name only the grand old Scottish Provident Institution, whose reserves are made up on a more conservative basis than that required by our Government and which added to such reserves the large sum of $600,000 to provide for such temporary gains during its last quinquennium only. The American Companies follow the same rule, but, not in the clear and satisfactory way last stated. None of them, however, divide the whole surplus, but hold a large part of it in hand to provide for their gains. For example, the last report of the New York Life shows that out of a surplus of $10,000,000 under the state standard, practically the same as ours, is considered only $4,827 036, as divisible, and it divided only a part of this, making its dividend from it A very striking proof of the necessity of observing carefully the established practice is afforded by the case of the Knickerbocker Life Insurance Company. Of course, the mortality in a Life Company only begins to tell after the risks have been on the books of the Company a considerable number of years.