

having been fixed at 19 mills. According to statistics compiled by the City Clerk of Toronto, the assessment for 1904 was \$142,328,397 which, at 19 mills on the dollar, yields \$2,704,239. As the population of Toronto is given officially as 219,002, the tax of 19 mills is equal to \$12.34 per head. If the sum to be raised by taxation in 1905 is correctly reported as \$2,814,166, the assessment must have been increased from \$142,328,397 to \$148,093,000, an increase of \$5,764,603, as compared with an assessment increase in 1904 over 1903 of \$3,739,792. The anticipated revenue, apart from property taxation, is reported for 1905 to be \$1,269,734, which includes, licenses, police court fines, rents of markets, water rates, street railway, etc.

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**A KING'S COUNSEL ON JURY TRIALS.**—Mr. R. C. Smith, K.C., spoke at some length on the 18th inst., before the Montreal Insurance Institute on "A few points of Insurance Law." He affirmed that the condition in life insurance contracts declaring the policy void if the person insured committed suicide was in reality "superfluous," because the law had always considered that rules of public order should deny the right to recover upon the policy in case of suicide. Although this was the legal situation it was practically impossible to obtain a decision from a jury which gave effect to the law, because, as a rule, a jury refused to be convinced that the deceased policy-holder had committed suicide. The sympathy of jurymen was so strong with the bereaved relatives that they rendered a verdict in favour of the claim against the insurance company, which they justified by holding that the death in question resulted from accident.

This being the case Mr. Smith said, "insurance companies would have to calculate upon suicide as a risk they must carry, as their chances of escaping condemnation were scarcely worth considering."

He pointed out that, whereas in earlier days the judge represented the Crown, but the jury the people, it was not so to-day, for both, judge and jury represented the people, hence trial by jury was no longer a safeguard of popular liberty. He condemned the jury system in civil cases as cumbersome and unsatisfactory, as jurymen had not the qualifications requisite for judging such cases. Whenever a widow was plaintiff and an insurance company defendant it was hopeless to expect a just verdict from a jury. Indeed, as a rule, insurance companies did not get justice from juries. While regret would be felt at the jury system being abolished, it was a question how long it would survive when it was so clumsy in working, so costly, and which frequently, if not habitually, rendered biased and unjust verdicts when individuals were plaintiffs and insurance companies defendants.

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**TENDERS FOR DEBENTURES.**—Attention is invited to advertisements in this issue asking for sealed Tenders for debentures of the Regina Public School District

issued for the purpose of raising funds to build two school houses. These debentures bear interest at  $4\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. per annum.

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**DEATH OF LORD ST. HELIERS.**—Lord St. Heliers has been very widely and very honourably known as Sir Francis Jenne, a judge of the High Court, England, and president of the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty division. He was also a Privy Councillor and held a distinguished position in the world of literature and scholarship. He was a member of the Board of the Pelican and British Empire Life office and served many years as Deputy Chairman of the Board of the British Empire Mutual Life Assurance Company prior to its amalgamation with the Pelican Company.

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**NEW SYSTEM OF NUMBERING STREETS.**—A scheme is before the City Council for re-numbering the buildings in this city on a novel plan. Instead of the numbers running from east to west on all streets so laid out the numbers in future will run from St. Lawrence westward and eastward, each No. 1 being at the corner of St. Lawrence. Unless this is very thoroughly carried out and quickly there will be endless and most annoying, indeed, embarrassing confusion caused.

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**NEWFOUNDLAND AND THE UNITED STATES.** The Upper House of the Legislature, Newfoundland, has passed Premier Bond's bill excluding American fishermen from Newfoundland waters. The bill provides that American fishing vessels, found within three miles of the coast of Newfoundland with bait, supplies or outfit purchased at any port in the island, shall be seized and forfeited, together with their cargoes. The bill was amended so as to permit the suspension of its operation at the discretion of the Government. The Governor's assent to the bill is expected before the end of the week, permitting the enforcement of the new law.

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**ARREST OF BANK MANAGER, YARMOUTH.**—The manager of the Bank of New Brunswick, who has been examining the books of the Bank of Yarmouth that recently failed, has caused the arrest of the manager of that bank on a charge of making false returns to the Government. It will be remembered that an ex-bank president and manager was sentenced to two years in jail for this offence a few years ago. An effort is being made to keep the industry in operation that was carried on by the firm whose transactions caused the collapse of the Bank of Yarmouth, which we trust will be successful.

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**FORT WILLIAM'S GOOD FORTUNE.**—The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway has acquired a large area of land near Fort William to serve as the company's terminal for the Lake Superior district. The railway property will be incorporated with the town, with