

in salutary ponderings on the uncertainty of things of this present life. Amongst his reflections it occurred to him that if it were so irksome and unpleasant for an innocent man to be immured, how must a bad man feel.—In the solitude and enforced idleness of his position, like others in similar predicament, trifles and trifling things became of interest to Mr. Dodd. Thus, for instance, the singing of the canary bird (an innocent prisoner also) belonging to the wife of the Governor of the Bastille, the sweet ballad-singing of the Governor's young daughter (a pretty brunette), the chatter of a caged blue jay, even the whirr of a noiseless sewing machine, all seemed to stand out more prominently, and to obtrude themselves on his notice more than in ordinary free life. Of course the captive's stay in durance was fortunately short, so he had no time to tame a spider like Robert Bruce (or Wallace was it?) nor to educate a pet mouse, nor write a history of his life, nor do any of those things to pass time away which history tells us so many distinguished prisoners have done. I am told that Mr. Dodd received much kind treatment and attention from the Governor's lady and daughter, so that he has no complaints to make of the prison fair. Seriously, it was a most unpleasant experience, and an awkward one, for Mr. Dodd to be pounced upon and incarcerated for no fault of his, through the blundering of officials. We can laugh at it now and make light of it, but it was no joke to our friend at the time.

We look anxiously for Companies' Reports, or Summaries of Insurance Transactions for 1884. Some have made money, like our friends, the "Royal Canadian," but has the general business of the year been done at a profit or loss? If, as I expect, a small profit can be shown I suppose we must give the C. F. U. A. credit for it. It will be well to enquire, if any profit is shown, whether it is due to the volume of business done being less, while the average amount of premiums was larger; or, a smaller number of claims for loss during '84, as compared with last year. There is undoubtedly a less amount of insurance called for now than under the former low rates. So far as I can ascertain the tendency to insure smaller sums is very marked for 1885 up to date.

The public seem to rely to a larger extent than formerly on fire protection, well-constructed buildings, and careful personal supervision. This is, of course, all as it should be, but a small amount of insurance on a risk, in a town with a liberal water supply means too often a total loss for the Companies, and this is an important matter for them. Whether a result of the approaching Annual Meeting of the C. F. U. A. will be the adoption, as is suggested, of a clause compelling the insured in case of a partial loss to contribute his proportion of the loss sustained as a co-insurer, I cannot say, but it will meet opposition in certain quarters—opposition sufficiently strong, perhaps, to defeat, or at least defer the adoption of the clause. It will be a strong measure no doubt, and the public will not like it forced on them, but if the Association says it must be passed, and acted on, how can the dear public avoid submission?

A strong letter has appeared in a daily paper, taking to task and roundly drubbing the Toronto Corporation for allowing such a state of things as exist in the Water Works Department. By the breaking down of the engine the other night the water was, *without warning*, turned off the northern part of the city. Each householder of course fancied his water-pipes had frozen, as the weather was intensely cold; and the consequent trouble and inconvenience each one was put to you can well imagine. Fancy a man prowling round for two hours, as the correspondent says he did, about midnight, making "hot applications" to his water-pipes in the cellar under the idea they were frozen. People with steam-heating apparatus and ranges were fearful lest the sudden in-flow of cold water to the apparatus would blow the concern to smithereens. That night some one tried to touch off the esplanade by

starting a fire in Beard's unoccupied Foundry, but fortunately, as the fire alarm only rung out two different numbers, instead of the usual medley, the Fire Brigade were able to locate and extinguish the fire before much harm was done.

I see the "Mutual Reserve" people are going to treat INSURANCE SOCIETY's articles, in future with "silent contempt." I note you do not propose to treat them in a similar way, so the *Reserve* will not be Mutual in this instance. By the way will not the Life Cos. have to meet that demand for cheaper Life Assurance which is shown by the support undoubtedly given to the "new plans"?

For once Insurance Companies have secured a favorable verdict from a jury (all owing to the articles published in a Commercial Journal). I refer to the case tried last week before Judge Rose in this city, Powell vs. the "City of London" and "Quebec." The evidence in the case could not have been listened to by any honest jurymen without his being convinced that the written statements of an applicant for insurance over his own signature ought to be held as binding him, seeing that upon such statements the Insurance Cos. base their contract. The result of this case, and the lesson it teaches, will be beneficial, I think, both to the insuring public and the Cos. generally.

I think I have written you a sufficient long letter to make amends for the lapse of last month.

Truly yours,  
ARIEL.

TORONTO, 14th February, 1885.

PORT HOPE, Jan. 24, 1885.

To the Editor INSURANCE SOCIETY.

DEAR SIR,—I send you a copy of Port Hope Times paper giving an editorial on the defunct Standard Insurance Company that you so kindly exposed over a year ago, and if you could kindly give us poor unfortunate shareholders some light on what we are now paying up our 50 per cent. collection, as we have never as yet seen any statement of its affairs, there was about \$52,000 stock held in Port Hope; any information you can give us will be thankfully received.

Yours truly,  
STOCKHOLDER.

[The article in the Port Hope Times referred to in the above gives a history of the Standard Fire Insurance Co., and of the dishonest representations on which its promoters succeeded in inducing persons to become stockholders. It winds up by demanding the dismissal of the Ontario Inspector of Insurance, on account of his allowing such a manifest fraud to prey on the public, "to prevent such another disgraceful swindle being played off on innocent people." Our readers will remember that we exposed the rottenness and fraud of this concern again and again, but the Inspector of Insurance allowed it to continue victimizing the public until the shell collapsed of itself. Like the Port Hope Times we held then, and we hold now, that the Ontario Inspector of Insurance had disgraced his office, and should be removed as worse than useless. We can at present give our correspondent no new facts regarding the present position of the estate, but it will make but little difference, for we are convinced that all the subscribed capital will have to be called in, and that even then creditors will receive but a small fraction of their claims. The estate is one of the worst ever brought before the public. The Exchange Bank was nothing to it.]

EDITOR.

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