

## THE FIRE INSURANCE OUTLOOK.

The Westchester Fire Insurance Company, of New York, presented recently in tabulated form the underwriting profits and losses for the last decade of the millionaire fire insurance companies, to the number of sixty, reporting to the New York insurance department. The following is a portion:

These statistics of fire insurance companies reporting to the New York insurance department seem to indicate that during the decade ending January 1st, 1895, the liabilities of the companies for risks in force have increased largely in excess of the increase in capital and surplus offered as indemnity.

The apparent logical conclusion appears to be that companies as a whole are weaker than they were ten years ago, unless it can be shown that the hazards of the business have decreased in a ratio equal to the increase in amount insured. While there has been a considerable diminution of the fire hazard in particular classes and localities, by reason of improved construction of buildings and in improved protection, yet the great increase in amount of property insured, in which the change in condition, if any, has been for the worse, makes an offset of considerable magnitude.

The valued policy laws of several States, the construction of the laws by the courts, the verdicts of juries against the companies, regardless of evidence, have tended to increase the hazards of the business.

Like a contagious disease, the morals of the assured, in so far as they relate to insurance, are being deadened and perverted by the success of neighbors realizing from a fire much more than the loss, especially in States where partial losses are declared to be constructively total, and the policy, after the fire, a liquidated claim. On the whole it is extremely doubtful if the fire hazard has materially decreased during the decade.

If the conclusion is that the hazard has not decreased, whither are the fire companies drifting? Their increase in resources not being in proportion to their increase in amount of insurance carried, it would seem to follow as an inevitable result that the limit of their expansion of business would mark the turning point of the road where the grade would be downward, and their resources would be insufficient to meet the volume of loss and expense to the end of the down grade, or to carry the risks taken on the plane of even liability.

At no time during this swelling of income by increase of risks have the companies met the full loss average on amount insured, the risks not having been carried the average time for which they were written.

So long as the volume of premiums received through the swelling process is on the increase, companies, both regular, individual or Lloyds, can show an apparent prosperity. The record for ten years shows that the premiums received have not been adequate, yet the receiving of the same in increased volume for a term in advance, furnished resources to meet current losses and expenses, an increase in volume of future premiums being depended upon to meet losses on the liabilities assumed on account of current receipts.

The vast amount insured by these companies, aggregating \$16,950,000,000, the immense credits based on the insurance policy would seem to render it desirable that the fire companies should have resources commensurate with the risks assumed, in order that commercial business and loans, having the basis of its credit and security combustible property, may have protection and indemnity from losses by fire as near absolute as possible. Not only should the fire companies be strong enough to meet the average daily losses, but should also be prepared with large surpluses to meet extraordinary conflagrations.

It does not appear from the record of the last ten years that the business of the companies as a whole is being conducted on a basis to produce these results.

## FORCED TO MARRY AGAIN?

There are widows and widows. We see sometimes a woman who is only too glad to get rid of the article calling himself a man who should have been a husband to her. With such a one second marriage is perfectly natural, and in such a case she has usually no insurance policy in her favor. Sometimes, too, the woman is not the ideal of conjugal goodness,

but as a rule the so-called "weaker vessel" is plastic to the influence of a true man, and will become his willing slave if she be sure of his affection. "It is her whole existence." If the woman marries again it is usually after a tremendous mental battle between her desire to remain true to the love of her lost husband and her duty to the children. Surely a man professing to give heart for heart will not neglect, if he can afford it, to place his devoted wife where she is not compelled to school herself to the love of another for the sake of a home. Every man cannot get a home together and save enough to maintain it, but nearly every man can, by laying by a small saving annually, semi-annually, or quarterly, in the form of an insurance premium, buy that desirable immunity for his otherwise unprotected wife and family. Looking at the matter from the standpoint of your children's best interests, which, think you, is better for them; a widow mother in your own home, or a re-married mother in another man's home? — *Weekly Statement.*

## THE PUBLIC HEALTH.

The Registrar-General's report for the week ending June 15th, states that the deaths registered in thirty-three great towns of England and Wales corresponded to an annual rate of 15.4 per 1,000 of their aggregate population. The annual death rate per 1,000 was highest at Liverpool, 23.8, and lowest at Burnley 10.5. There were 2,678 births and 1,213 deaths in London last week, the former being 77 above and the latter 247 below the average for the same week of the last ten years. The death rate per thousand, per annum, which has been steadily declining, last week fell to 14.4. The deaths included one from small-pox, 71 from measles, or within one of the average; 12 from scarlet fever, or six fewer than the average; and 45 from diphtheria, or fifteen more than the average for the week. The deaths referred to diseases of the respiratory organs, which had been 245, 193, and 163 in the preceding three weeks, further declined last week to 152, and were 88 below the corrected average. The deaths attributed directly to influenza numbered 5, having been 10, 15, and 5 in the preceding three weeks. Different forms of violence caused 55 deaths, concerning all but three of which inquests were held. In Greater London 3,742 births and 1,580 deaths were registered, corresponding to annual rates of 32.3 and 13.6 per 1,000 of the estimated population. — *Review.*

## INGENIOUS INSURANCE FRAUDS IN FRANCE.

Considerable sensation, says the Paris correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle*, has been caused in French insurance circles by an ingenious fraud, which, in the case of the Union Company, has ended in a robbery of 300,000f. Several months ago the managing directors of the Foncière, Patrimoine and Union Insurance Companies received a letter from Alençon signed by M. Bouillet de la Forrest, in which the latter stated that he was the clerk of a local notary named Cohn. He offered his confidential services to transact lucrative business as agent for the companies. He added that the answer to his application might be forwarded to his employers, but marked "private." The offer was accepted. A few days ago other letters were sent proposing the sale of a Government annuity of 17,000f. for 300,000f. The affair being arranged, the so-called notary called at the offices, and having drawn up the conditions of sale, left the warrant with the further announcement that the principal would complete the transaction and receive the money. At the Patrimoine and Foncière offices the directors were absent, and M. de la Forrest was told to call again on Monday. At the Union the swindler was more fortunate. He produced the papers, and after the necessary signatures on both sides received 300 bank-notes of 1,000f. It was noticed in all three offices that the individual came in a cab which was loaded with luggage. The fraud was discovered by an accidental conversation between M. Brier, of the Foncière Company, and the managing director of the Union. The three Treasury warrants all bore the same number, and it became at once evident that they were forgeries. The police have a clue to the offender, who is believed to be in London.

## FLAX CULTURE.

The importance of flax cultivation as an alternative crop since the price of wheat has so much declined, is offered to the attention of Canadian farmers. In the counties of Waterloo, Wellington, Perth and part of Huron, flax has been one of the best paying crops for a number of years, owing to the price of the seed reaching a dollar a bushel of 56 lbs., while the fibre when scutched and prepared for market is worth as much as the seed, if not more. In the county of Waterloo a ready market is found at the extensive flax mills of James Livingston, where he manufactures linseed oil and oil cake for feeding cattle, as well as scutching the flax ready for market. There is another extensive mill at Doon, the property of Messrs. Perine & Son, where the fibre is made into strong ropes as well as clothes lines and the finest wrapping threads.

Besides the shipments from these counties, the Mennonites of Manitoba ship largely to the mills of Mr. Livingston. The year before last, it is stated by Mr. John A. Donaldson, no less than 160,000 bushels of seed, and last year over 100,000 bushels, came from these people. Their land being well adapted for the growth of flax, they get from a sowing of half a bushel of seed to the acre a yield of 20 or even 25 bushels to the acre. From Manitoba there is the promise of a heavy crop this year. "I am sorry to add we cannot say this for Ontario owing to the want of rain. The crop will be very light."

## THE LARGEST SAILING SHIP.

The new five-masted sailing ship "Potosi," built at Bremen, for a Hamburg firm (F. Laeisz) was launched on the 9th of June. The new ship is of the following dimensions: Length over all, 394 feet (English); length between perpendiculars, 362 feet; width over the plating amidships, 49 feet 9 inches; depth from upper edge of keel to under the main deck amidships, 31 feet 2½ inches. Her register tonnage is 3,955 tons gross and 3,780 tons net; displacement on an average draft of 25 feet, 8,580 tons; carrying capacity about 6,150 tons. Siemens-Marten steel is the material of which this colossal sailer is built, in accordance with the regulations of the Bureau Veritas and the English Lloyds for the highest class and under the special survey of those institutions. The spread of canvas, with all sail set, will be equal to about 5,000 square yards.

The "Potosi" is the largest sailing ship at present existing, and the only other five-masted sailing vessel is the French ship "La France," of Dunkirk, but she is of smaller dimensions than the "Potosi."

## ALCONQUIN WORDS.

We published a year since a list of the words which have been adopted into English from the language of the North American Indians of various races. Attentive correspondents have since given to us totem, netop, crony (or near companion), and humbo, a name in use in New Hampshire for maple syrup. The full list is now as follows—a faint and rather shabby record of a great race:

Caribou,	Sachem,
Chincapin,	Sagamore,
Chipmunk,	Samp,
Hominy,	Sannop,
Humbo,	Sassafras,
Moccasin,	Skunk,
Moose,	Squaw,
Mugwump,	Squetague,
Musquash,	Squash,
Netop,	Succotash,
Opossum,	Tautog,
Pappoose,	Toboggan,
Persimmon,	Tomahawk,
Pipsissewa,	Totem,
Pone,	Wampum,
Quahaug,	Wigwam.

—*Boston Commonwealth.*

—In 1788 Lord Chancellor Thurlow refused a bankrupt a certificate because he had lost £5 at gambling, after he became involved in financial difficulty.

—Young lady (out yachting)—"What is the matter, Captain Quarterdeck?" Captain—"The fact is, my dear young lady, we've broken our rudder." Young lady—"I wouldn't worry about that. The rudder is mostly under water, and it isn't likely people will notice it."