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Insuring the Canadian Contingent. Among the many instances of kindly and sympathetic treatment of the troops now about to embark for South Africa, the generosity of the unknown donor who authorized Sir Charles Tupper to insure each officer and each man in the sum of one thousand dollars, is most thoughtful. The insurance has been effected in the Ocean Accident and Guarantee Company. The comforts provided for our soldiers during their long voyage, and the cheers that will follow the outward bound trooper as she leaves Quebec, will be gratefully remembered by every man on board, but, long after the delicacies are consumed and the faces of cheering friends have disappeared from view, the thought that some one has made even partial provision for those left behind will comfort many a sore heart in the quiet watches of the night on board the good ship "Sardinian."

The evidence of thoughtful regard for those who fight the battles of their Queen and country is not confined to Canada. In England, although the fund opened by the Lord Mayor of London for the refugees from the Transvaal has already reached \$675,000, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge, chairman of the Patriotic Relief Fund, have addressed petitions to the Lord Mayor requesting the opening of a new fund for the widows and orphans of those who fall in the war.

Surely, it is the perfection of the human character, to be at once equal to its own happiness, and yet sensible to those sufferings and miseries of fellow-creatures which its exertions can alleviate.

Bank Amalgamation. The great success attending the consolidation of banking interests in England has led to a movement of the same character in the United States, where all sorts of rumours of the amalgamation of some of the larger New York banks are being freely circulated.

Despite the statements of the chief executive officers that no substantial basis exists for the report, banking circles are said to be freely discussing the possible union of the First National, the National Union and the National Bank of Commerce. The New York "Commercial Bulletin" says:—

Notwithstanding the explicit and general denials, the prevailing sentiment in banking circles undoubtedly is that some very important negotiations are in progress; and this sentiment is helped by the extreme intimacy of the controlling interests of the various institutions. In the first place it is argued that the marked success of the City Bank consolidation is acting as a strong incentive to bring about a consolidation exceeding even that in magnitude; while at the same time the economies possible under such conditions constitute, it is argued, a new factor in the competition of banks and trust companies.

"The reports current in banking circles are replete with circumstantial details. Their chief framework seems to consist of the pronounced influence of the Mutual Life Insurance Company and of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan in the three institutions. A short time ago, it will be recalled, four directors representing Mutual Life interests were elected to the Bank of Commerce directorate, including A. D. Juilliard, Geo. C. Haven, James N. Jarvie and Jos. C. Hendrix. The National Union Bank is, as is well known, controlled by Mutual Life Insurance Company interests. Mr. Geo. F. Baker, president of the First National Bank, is chairman of the Finance Committee of the Mutual Life Insurance Company. It will, therefore, be seen that the Mutual Life influence is very strong in the three institutions."

When will this movement extend to Canada, where the competition between banks is the subject of serious discussion at every meeting of bankers, and where a consolidation of the interests of several of the institutions now occupying the same territory would soon illustrate the truth of the "Bulletin's" contention that "the economies possible under such conditions constitute a new factor in the competition of banks and trust companies."