

insurance and actuarial institutes of Great Britain, covering a wide range of interesting subjects as the following partial list will show:—Ethics of Insurance, The Modern Corn Mill, The Growing Fire Hazard of Central City Districts, Heredity in Life Assurance, Sickness Insurance, Employers' Liability, Investments, Average Conditions of a Fire Policy. All of these and other subjects (the Journal containing fifteen papers, several of them illustrated) are by prominent representatives of every branch of the insurance business.

Revelations in assessment and Fraternal Life Insurance. By John J. Habrich, 2043 Seventh Avenue, New York. Price \$1.50.

PERSONALS.

MR. A. C. SKELTON, of the Bank of British North America, is homeward bound on a brief vacation. Mr. Skelton leaves via the Government Railway to-morrow evening for Halifax, whence he sails by the Dominion Line Mail-Steamer. The many friends of this active and amiable official of the British Bank will unite with THE CHRONICLE in wishing him a pleasant voyage, a happy holiday, and a safe return to Montreal.

Obituary.

MR. HIRAM WALKER.

The death of Mr. Hiram Walker, the virtual founder of the town of Walkerville, and the creator of an enormous business, removes from the scene of his labours a very active and useful citizen. Mr. Walker, who was approaching his eightieth year, was an American by birth. By diligence and close attention to his business he succeeded in making the name and reputation of his firm very widely known. Although always of active habits, and attending at his office regularly, Mr. Walker has of late years ceased to supervise the details of the business, leaving the control thereof largely to his three sons, all of whom are members of the house.

Mr. Hiram Walker will be missed and mourned by the people of Walkerville, to whose charities he was always a generous contributor, and for whom he built the Episcopalian Church. He is stated to have carried a heavy amount of assurance on his life.

MR. WILLIAM McLAREN.

The unexpected and sudden death of Mr. William McLaren, assistant sub-manager of the Royal Insurance Company, on the 28th ultimo, is thus reported in the "Policy-holder" of the same date:—

"The closing days of the year have witnessed the terribly sudden demise of the assistant sub-manager

of the Royal Insurance Company, Mr. Wm. McLaren. On Thursday last he was, apparently, in good health, and it is supposed that death, which occurred this morning, was caused through eating a bad oyster. Mr. Wm. McLaren was a son of the late manager of the Royal. Formerly in the Manchester branch office, he was transferred to the Foreign Department at the head office, becoming chief of the department. After his father's death he was created assistant secretary, and when Mr. F. S. Kingsley was appointed sub-manager, eight months after the death of Mr. J. Beavan, he received in August, 1897, the unique title of assistant sub-manager."

Correspondence.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for views expressed by Correspondents

Quebec, January 4th, 1899.

To the Editor of THE CHRONICLE:—Some years ago certain abuses had crept into the business of Fire Insurance, chief amongst which was the practice of the dividing up of commissions. Every man, of every profession or trade, who had some friend whose fire business he could control, or whom he could advise on the subject, expected from the agent whom he honored with his patronage a slice of the commission which the latter earned. This entirely distinct from the brokerage usual amongst agents, "those who gain their living by the insurance business," when dealing with surplus business amongst themselves. Scores of men in every walk of life swooped down upon the insurance men as a hawk does upon its prey, and made them pay toll, till at last the nuisance became so unbearable and demoralizing that the Association of Underwriters had to step in and put a stop to it.

Now, it seems to me, that some similar action, though perhaps in a different form, will have to be taken by the Life Assurance Companies to protect themselves and their agents from the abuses which have been gradually creeping into the business until they have attained such proportions that it is a matter of the utmost importance that they should be immediately dealt with. In the Life business it is not only the dividing of commission with the friendly outsiders who can control, or pretend that they can control, certain risks more or less desirable, but it has come now to the point of dividing, or even handing over *in toto* to the assured himself the remuneration which the Agent has earned, in order that the latter may have the distinguished honor of inscribing the name and address of his exalted patron upon the books of the company.

Everyone knows that the labor connected with Life Assurance is much more severe than that entailed by the working of any other form of Assurance. People who will readily and voluntarily insure their furniture