

GREAT as have been some men who died young, who knows how much greater they would have been had their lives been prolonged! Might not Marlowe have rivalled Shakespeare? Yet possibly Byron had already given up his best, and Shelley and Keats might not have surpassed their early efforts. Had the author of "Festus" died at twenty-three there would have been lamentation as over Keats, but Mr. Bailey has lived half a century longer without producing a second poem. Tasso, though he lived twenty years after "Jerusalem Delivered," never equalled that epic written at thirty-one. Still, there are men whose longevity has certainly stood for much. Michel Angelo showed astonishing precocity, but he owes to his eighty-nine years his great renown as painter, sculptor, and sonneteer. Voltaire's fame, again, rests on the entirety of his writings, not on any single work, and on the literary dictatorship with which age invested him. Out of twenty years of his life, and his fame would perceptibly shrink. Goethe, Emerson, Carlyle, Longfellow, Tennyson, Hugo, Dumas, all had the advantage of fulness of years, so as to be judged by bulk as well as quality. Humboldt, too, owed to his ninety years a portion of his reputation. The true comparison would obviously be between works produced at the same age, or between men dying at about the same age; but it is much easier to test achievement than capacity. Perhaps the best books (*in posse*) have never been written, and we often feel that the men were greater than their works. Who knows, moreover, what geniuses have died in childhood!—*Atlantic Monthly*.

COMPANIONS.

A French writer (whom I love well) speaks of three kinds of companions: men, women and books.—SIR JOHN DAVIES.

We have companions, comrade mine;
Jolly good fellows, tried and true,
Are filling their cups with the Rhenish wine,
And pledging each other as I do you.
Never a man in all the land
But has, in his hour of need, a friend,
Who stretches to him a helping hand,
And stands by him to the bitter end.
If not before, there is comfort then,
In the strong companionship of men.

But better than that, old friend of mine,
Is the love of woman, the life of life,
Whether in maiden's eyes it shine,
Or melts in the tender kiss of wife;
A heart contented to feel, not know,
That finds in the other its sole delight;
White hands that are loth to let us go,
The tenderness that is more than might!
On earth below, in heaven above,
Is there anything better than woman's love?

I do not say so, companion mine,
For what, without it, would I be here?
It lightens my troubles, like this good wine,
And, if I must weep, sheds tear for tear!
But books, old friends that are always new,
Of all good things that we know are best;
They never forsake us, as others do,
And never disturb our inward rest.
Here is truth in a world of lies,
And all that in man is great and wise!

Better than men and women, friend,
That are dust, though dear in our joy and pain,
Are the books their cunning hands have penned,
For they depart, but the books remain;
Through these they speak to us what was best
In the loving heart and the noble mind;
All their royal souls possessed
Belongs for ever to all mankind!
When others fail him, the wise man looks
To the sure companionship of books.

—R. H. Stoddard, in the Book World.

In each respiration an adult inhales one pint of air. A healthy man respire sixteen or twenty times a minute, or 20,000 a day; a child twenty-five or thirty-five times a minute. While standing, the adult respiration is twenty-two times a minute; while lying down, thirteen. The superficial surface of the lungs, i.e., of their valveolar space, is 200 square yards. The amount of air respired every twenty-four hours is about 10,000 quarts.

THE SPRING MEDICINE.—The popularity which Hood's Sarsaparilla has gained as a spring medicine is wonderful. It possesses just those elements of health-giving, blood-purifying and appetite-restoring which everybody seems to need at this season. Do not continue in a dull, tired, unsatisfactory condition when you may be so much benefited by Hood's Sarsaparilla. It purifies the blood and makes the weak strong.

EVERY tissue of the body, every bone, muscle and organ, is made stronger and more healthful by the use of Hood's Sarsaparilla.

WESTERN ASSURANCE CO.

FORTIETH ANNUAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS.

Report of Directors—Continued Prosperity—Large Profits and Liberal Dividends—Considerable Addition to the Reserves—Good Management and Excellent Results.

The fortieth annual meeting of shareholders of the above Company was held at its offices in this city at noon on Friday, 20th ult.

Mr. A. M. Smith, President, occupied the chair, and Mr. J. J. Kenny, Managing Director, was appointed to act as secretary to the meeting.

The secretary read the following annual report:—
In presenting the Annual Report of the business of the year ending 31st December, 1890, the Directors are pleased to be able to submit to the Shareholders such gratifying evidence of the continued prosperity of the Company as is embraced in the accompanying accounts.

It will be seen from the Revenue Account that there is a profit balance on the transactions of the year of \$155,125 19.

A satisfactory increase is shown in the receipts from Fire premiums, while in the Marine branch certain lines of business, which have not resulted profitably in the past, have been discontinued, and the premium income somewhat reduced.

Two half-yearly dividends at the rate of ten per cent. per annum, amounting to \$60,000, have been declared, and the sum of \$26,225 21 has been written off investments to bring them to their market value at the close of the year, when, owing to the disturbed conditions existing in monetary circles, almost all classes of securities were more or less depreciated.

After providing for these deductions from the year's earnings, \$75,000 has been carried to the Reserve, making that fund \$900,000, and \$16,186 39 remains at the credit of Profit and Loss Account. The total surplus of the Company—which these two latter amounts constitute—is, therefore, \$916,186 39, and deducting from this the amount estimated as necessary to re-insure or run off all existing risks, say \$546,506 64, a net surplus remains over Capital and all liabilities of \$369,679 75.

STATEMENT OF BUSINESS FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST, 1890.

Revenue Account.	
Fire premiums.....	\$1,333,582 70
Marine premiums.....	715,032 49
Less re-assurances.....	2,048,615 19
	388,128 30
Interest account.....	\$1,060,486 89
	43,367 18
Fire losses, including an appropriation for all losses reported to Dec. 31st, 1890.....	665,071 26
Marine losses, including an appropriation for all losses reported to Dec. 31st, 1890.....	368,274 07
General expenses, agents' commission, etc.....	615,383 55
Balance to profit and loss.....	155,125 19
	\$1,703,854 07

Profit and Loss Account.	
Balance from last year.....	12,286 41
Profit for the year.....	155,125 19
	\$167,411 60

Dividend paid July, 1890.....	25,000 00
Dividend payable 8th January, 1891.....	25,000 00
Written off Securities.....	26,225 21
Carried to Reserve Fund.....	75,000 00
Balance.....	16,186 39
	\$167,411 60

Assets.	
United States and State Bonds.....	\$450,525 00
Dominion of Canada Stock.....	211,417 50
Loan Company and Bank Stocks.....	151,577 40
Company's building.....	65,000 00
Municipal Debentures.....	80,360 23
Cash on hand and on deposit.....	277,260 51
Bills receivable.....	34,508 27
Mortgages.....	16,466 60
Reinsurance losses.....	43,642 36
Interest due and accrued.....	4,989 50
Agents' balances and Sundry accounts.....	210,918 82
	\$1,555,665 19

Liabilities.	
Capital Stock paid up.....	\$500,000 00
Losses under adjustment.....	114,478 60
Dividend payable 8th January, 1891.....	25,000 00
Reserve Fund.....	\$900,000 00
Balance profit and loss.....	16,186 39
	\$1,555,665 19

A. M. SMITH, President. J. J. KENNY, Managing Director.

WESTERN ASSURANCE OFFICES, TORONTO, February 9th, 1891.

AUDITORS' REPORT.

To the President and Directors of the Western Assurance Company:

GENTLEMEN,—We hereby certify that we have audited the books of the Company for the year ending 31st December, 1890, and have examined the vouchers and securities in connection therewith, and find the same carefully kept, correct, and properly set forth in the above statement.

R. R. CATHERN, JOHN M. MARTIN, F.C.A., Auditors.

TORONTO, February 9th, 1891.

In moving the adoption of the report the President said:—

The Annual Report and accompanying accounts which you have just heard read present, I think, so clearly the result of the business of the past year, and so satisfactorily the condition of affairs at the close of the year, that it is scarcely necessary for me in moving the adoption of the Report to do more than congratulate you upon the happy auspices under which we meet at this, the fortieth annual gathering of the shareholders of the Company. There is one item in the accounts, however, to which it may be well to refer particularly. I allude to the amount written off securities in order to enable us to place them in the Balance Sheet, as has always been our custom, at their market value on 31st December. You are aware that just at that time the prices of stocks and bonds generally were much depressed, and the fact that our securities were affected to such a comparatively slight extent is perhaps the best evidence that I could be offered as to the character of our investments. Moreover, I think we are safe in regarding this as merely a temporary depreciation, and that the former values will be, as indeed some have already been, regained.

I may be permitted to say also that, interested as I have been in this Company since its organization—for 40 years as a stock-holder, for 25 years as a director, and for the past eight years as its president—it is with a feeling of pride, which I think is pardonable, that I regard the position which the Western occupies to-day among the financial institutions of this country and among the insurance companies of this continent. Organized, as it was, at a time when the popular belief existed that indemnity for losses by fire—or in fact from death or any other calamity which might be covered by an insurance policy—could be obtained only from the other side of the Atlantic, it had secured at the end of its first ten years' struggle for existence against this popular delusion an annual premium income of only some \$60,000. The twentieth annual report shows that it had increased this five-fold, and at the close of its thirtieth year its income exceeded one million dollars per annum; and having thoroughly established its prestige at home it had extended its field of operations beyond the limits of Canada. It is now entering upon its fifth decade with an income of nearly a million and three-quarters, derived from all the provinces of the Dominion and from the United States, as well as some of the British West India Islands; with cash assets of upwards of a million and a half; with a profit balance on its last year's transactions of over \$150,000; and with a corps of tried officers and agents loyal to the Company and its interests; and, if I may say it without egotism, with an experienced Board of Directors, several of whom may claim to be veterans, and not likely to be frightened by "fire," even though it may come (as it sometimes does through conflagrations) in "volleys," rather trying to the nerves. I think I may say, looking at what has been accomplished from small beginnings and looking at our present position—that by continuing the policy which has guided us in the past, of fair and liberal dealings with our insurers and

just recognition of the services of our agents, upon whose judgment we have so largely to depend in the selection of business—we may confidently look for at least an equal measure of success for the Western in the future to that which it has enjoyed in the past, and, as a consequence, to its being in a position to continue to make satisfactory returns to its shareholders upon their invested capital.

Permit me to say before closing my remarks that—under a kind Providence—I feel that we are indebted in no small degree to the wisdom and untiring energy of our Managing Director and his able staff of assistants for the high position that our Company now occupies in the estimation of the insuring public.

Mr. George A. Cox, Vice-President of the Company, in seconding the adoption of the report said:—

The satisfactory nature of the report now submitted for your approval, and the full explanations of the President in moving its adoption, leave but little for me to say. There is, however, one important item in the statement to which reference has not been made, and that is the very substantial addition of no less than seventy-five thousand dollars to the Reserve Fund. With net earnings for the year equal to thirty-one per cent. of our paid-up capital, it was not unreasonable that the dividend should arise: Are you only going to pay a ten per cent. dividend, less than one-third of your net earnings? But I am sure the shareholders and the public will appreciate the prudence and recognize the necessity of providing in good years like this for less fortunate ones, when we are called upon to meet exceptional losses by conflagrations such as have occurred, and in all probability will occur again.

It is very satisfactory to know that after fully providing for our reinsurance fund, which takes \$546,506 64, we have a net surplus over and above our capital and all liabilities to the public equal to about seventy-five per cent. of our paid-up capital.

The splendid position of the Western on its fortieth anniversary fully justifies the President in feeling proud of the Company and proud of his long and honourable connection with it; and I shall also indulge a little in the same way. The best standard by which to judge a company is the relative position it occupies at home, and the Western company has stood in the very front rank, its income from fire and marine premiums in Canada exceeding that of any other company doing business here—English, American or Canadian—and what is still more gratifying, its loss ratio on its Canadian business is considerably below the average of both the home and foreign Fire Insurance Companies making returns to the Dominion Insurance Department.

I may also refer to the relative position of the Company on this continent. Of one hundred and sixty companies reporting to the Canadian and New York Insurance Departments only some twenty exceed the Western in volume of business; and the steadily improving character of the Company's United States business, as shown by its diminishing loss ratio, affords good grounds for anticipating that the continued efforts in that direction of its representatives in the United States will make an equally favourable record for it there to that which it enjoys at home. It is gratifying to know that, notwithstanding some exceptionally trying years, the business of that branch shows a fair profit to the Company, and that the year just closed has been one of the most favourable in its experience.

I very heartily concur, Mr. President, in all that you have said as to the obligations we are under to our Managing Director, who brings to bear upon the business of the Company a thorough and ever-increasing knowledge of the insurance world and the insurance business in all its details. It is to his intelligent and close supervision of the Company's interests and to his efficient and well-selected staff that we are largely indebted for the position that we are so proud of to-day. I have much pleasure in seconding the resolution for the adoption of the report.

On motion of Mr. A. Nairn, seconded by Mr. William Ross, a cordial vote of thanks was passed to the President and Board of Directors for their services and attention to the interests of the Company during the past year.

Messrs. F. J. Stewart and J. K. Niven having been appointed scrutineers, the election of Directors for the ensuing year was proceeded with, which resulted in the unanimous re-election of the old Board, viz., Messrs. A. M. Smith, George A. Cox, Hon. S. C. Wood, Robert Beatty, A. T. Fulton, George McMurrich, H. N. Baird, W. R. Brock and J. J. Kenny. At a meeting of the Board of Directors held subsequently, Mr. A. M. Smith was re-elected President and Mr. George A. Cox, Vice-President for the ensuing year.

A CANADIAN MILO.

LOUIS CYR, of Montreal, who is variously called the Canadian Sampson and Hercules, has been performing some remarkable feats of strength in New York. He first put up a dumbbell weighing 102 pounds, lifting the bell with one hand and holding it out straight from the shoulder in a horizontal position. He then lifted a 232 pound dumbbell with one hand to the shoulder, and then slowly pushed it up and held it in that position. He next lifted the 232 pound and the 102 pound dumbbell with a man who weighed 150 pounds with one finger. The aggregate weight lifted was 480 pounds, which beat Cyr's own record by 40 pounds. Cyr balanced Mme. Minnie Cyr, who weighs 118 pounds, while she hung on a ladder on his chin. Cyr's best exhibition was lifting a platform bound with iron, on which was 18 men and a 232 pound dumbbell, with his back and hands. He was eager to lift 4,000 pounds weight, but the platform was not large enough. The actual weight the giant lifted was 3,337 pounds. He has, it is said, lifted 3,339 pounds of pig iron in the same manner. He then shouldered a barrel of lime, which weighed 251 pounds, with one hand from the floor. He finished his feats by lifting a man weighing 200 pounds with one hand, and holding him dangling in the air above his head. Cyr, I might remark, is a monster in size. He weighs 280 pounds, stands 5 feet 10½ inches in his stockings, and measures 60 inches around the chest. His right arm above the elbow measures 21 inches. He is 27 years old. He is declared to be the nearest approach to the man whom Delilah betrayed that has been seen within the lifetime of living man.

Rheumatism

Is of two kinds, acute and chronic. The former is accompanied by high fever, and in the swollen joints there is intense pain, which often suddenly changes from one part of the body to another. Chronic rheumatism is without fever and not so severe, but more continuous and liable to come on at every storm or after slight exposure. Rheumatism is known to be a disease of the blood, and Hood's Sarsaparilla has had great success in curing it. This medicine possesses qualities which neutralize acidity, and purify, enrich and vitalize the blood.

ENTIRELY CURED.

"I had attacks of rheumatism which increased in severity. I took three bottles of Hood's Sarsaparilla and I am pleased to say the rheumatic pains ceased, my appetite and digestion became better, and my general health greatly improved. I am firmly convinced that Hood's Sarsaparilla cured me, as I have felt no recurrence of this blood disease."—WM. SCOON, Geneva, N.Y.

N.B.—If you decide to take Hood's Sarsaparilla do not be induced to buy any other.

Hood's Sarsaparilla

Sold by all Druggists. \$1.00; six for \$5.00. Prepared only by C. I. HOOD & CO., Apothecaries, Lowell, Mass.

100 DOSES ONE DOLLAR.