

THE GREATEST TASK OF THE TIME.

In his latest contribution to "The Americas" publication, Vice-President Roberts of the National City Bank says that the trouble at the bottom of all the turbulence in the industrial world at the present time and the pressure upon the Government to interfere in business affairs is "failure to understand natural economic laws," which are "always at work accomplishing ends sought by such agitation, and doing so far more efficiently and certainly than it can be accomplished by arbitrary measures." Every capable student of the subject and every man of ability and experience in the conduct of industrial, commercial and financial affairs, cannot fail to realize this as a fact of the utmost importance to all interests involved in production and trade. The danger comes now from failure of the labor factor to realize this, though it is quite as essential to its own success and future well-being as to that of capital. The individuals in its ranks are far more numerous than the others, and the failure to pursue the right course would bring more suffering upon them as well as loss upon communities of the nation.

The extent to which there was Government interference when the nation was compelled to take part in the war in Europe for its own future safety was justified by the haste necessary for doing its part promptly, rapidly and effectively. But that condition made it terribly costly, not to say wasteful. It deranged productive industries and trade within the country and in its relation to others, and piled a burden of taxation and debt upon the nation which it will take years to remove. The fact that it contributed so effectively to accomplishing the purpose of the war time is far from being an argument in favor of continuing the costly process in time of peace, for which it would be far from successful in results. What is most needed for all concerned is as speedy a return as is attainable to normal economic conditions and methods. The vast and costly change from the working of these, and the situation produced thereby, make it a difficult task, but none the less essential for a rapid recovery of prosperity and progress.

BEST'S KEY RATINGS.

Alfred M. Best Co., New York, latest edition of Key Ratings recently issued bears evidence of great painstaking in the preparation of this well known and valuable work. It contains in compact and accessible form the comparative financial responsibility, loss paying record, and efficiency of management of all the stock fire and marine companies operating in the United States, also of seventy prominent American Mutual companies. Also a condensed compilation of reference matter for property owners, financial institutions, insurance agents, brokers and executives.

ELECTRIC WIRING.

Mr. A. C. Cameron, Fire Chief, Oshawa, Ont., in an address delivered before the Convention of Fire Chiefs at Calgary, Alta., August 19th to 22nd, dealt with the subject of electric wiring as follows:

I feel that I am in a position to speak in this respect with more or less authority, owing to the fact that I have been engaged in this business for many years and am a practical man. I have grown up to this line of work and realize the great importance of the proper installation of all electrical appliances and wiring of all kinds, also the great danger of fire if the proper installations are neglected. I am an electrical contractor and I must say that the Hydro-Electric inspection department of Ontario is bringing about great changes in the way of fire prevention along these lines with greater safety to the public and the users of electricity. There was a suggestion made by Chief Ten Eyck, of the Hamilton fire department, in his address of last year, when he suggested the licensing of all electricians. I must say that 'his suggestion should receive the hearty support of every member of this association. By making all electricians pass an examination and take out a certificate, would do away with the so-called electrician, or commonly known to the legitimate contractor as a "piker." This, in time, would give the inspection department greater assistance and render less trouble for the inspectors, which I believe would be greatly appreciated by them, and, at the same time, render better and safer service to the public. This, in my opinion, is a very important question worthy of immediate attention, and some action which would remedy all such conditions.

LIFE UNDERWRITERS' CONVENTION IN CALGARY, ALTA.

The Life Underwriters' Convention in Calgary August 19th to 22nd was carried out according to program, and a cordial welcome was extended to over three hundred delegates by Mayor Marshall and the members of the Calgary Life Underwriters' Association.

Following a very able address, given by Mr. Reamy, of Edmonton, on part timers, in which he referred to them as being parasites upon the producing members of the profession. Mr. A. R. Darker of the Canada Life proposed the following resolution:

"This convention of Life Underwriters goes on record as opposed to the employment of the part-time agent in cities or towns of five thousand population or over, and that this question be referred to the executive committee with a view to securing the co-operation of the Life Officers' Association with the above object in view."