INSURANCE MEN AND DEMOBILISATION.

An interesting point was mentioned by Mr. S. G. Warner, president of the Institute of Actuaries, at the recent annual meeting, in regard to the future question of demobilisation. "What we feel," said Mr. Warner, "is that we have so many students of our science connected with this Institute who have at the call of their country gone out to the field of action, and thereby unfortunately suffered great delay in their studies, that it is our duty as far as we can to urge that at the earliest possible moment, when the national needs permit of it, these men who have already suffered this considerable postponement in their study—which in any case has to be undertaken in their hours of leisure, after office work is done—should be able to come back and resume their studies as soon as ever possible. We have made representations to that effect as forcibly as circumstances will allow, and, having done that, we must leave the matter in the hands of the authorities. This is intertwined with another question—the question of the employees of insurance offices generally. Many of the men are of course in both positions, and I imagine through their offices they will be doing the same thing. We disclaim any idea of putting in a plea for one in preference to another. As far as possible we are trying to remove any impression of that sort, so that the Institute and the insurance companies will act along the same lines, and I should think we have a very fair prospect of our reasonable representations receiving practical attention."

It may perhaps be early days yet to refer to the matter of demobilisation. But the point raised by Mr. Warner is a very important one. Once the urgent needs of the war are past, it would be extremely foolish to keep well-trained, intellectual men, wasting their time in the routine of army life, instead of giving them the opportunity at the earliest moment to resume that work and those studies, in which they have previously shown their capacity, and in following which, also, they can render most valuable service in the solution of the many problems which will press for attention after the war. Insurance officials and others in Canada, who are interested in men of the type named who are now in the Army, might very well bring this point to the attention of the Canadian military authorities. Steps are being actively taken by the Institute of Actuaries to support a scheme for the supply of educational works to prisoners of war and those interned. University matriculation and degree examinations have taken place in some of the internment camps.

ACTUARIAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA.

It was recently announced that the services of the members of the Actuarial Society of America, collectively and individually, were offered to the U. S. Government, in connection with mathematical and organisation work, arising from the war; for which actuaries' services are invaluable and indeed essential. But the fact was not stated that the same offer was made, at the request of the Canadian members of the Society, to the Canadian Government, in a letter addressed to Sir Edward Kemp, Minister of Militia. As is well known, the Actuarial Society is international in the character of its membership, Canadian actuaries constituting a large and influential section, not only of the Society but of its governing Council.

QUALIFICATION OF SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES' DIRECTORS.

Mr. Finlayson, the Dominion Superintendent of Insurance, is drawing the attention of British and other companies controlling Canadian subsidiary Canadian corporations to the necessity of strict compliance with the law regarding the qualifications of directors of these subsidiary concerns. The question has been raised as to whether the directors of some of these controlled companies are properly qualified having regard to the provisions of the Insurance Act or the companies' charters. In the case of companies recently incorporated, the Superintendent states, the provision in their charters is that a director in order to be qualified for a position on the Board must hold absolutely in his own right and in his own name and for his own use, at least $2,500 of the capital stock of the Company. The Department in its examination of these compances this year will enquire particularly as to the qualification of each director and where it appears to be necessary evidence will be called for that this provision has been complied with.

SERIOUS NEW HAZARD IN GRAIN ELEVATORS.

It is reported that, beginning June 1, the United States Government requires that all grain going into elevators be tested for the percentage of moisture. This is usually done in a small boxlike contrivance, heated by gas or gasoline burners, the grain being placed in a glass beaker with a low-grade oil and the water driven off by heating and condensing in a small test tube and there measured.

These devices introduce the hazard of open flames in a dust-laden atmosphere and are generally found on the first floor of the elevator. It is considered important that this process be excluded from the elevator or any other place where open flames would be dangerous, and that preferably it be located in the boiler or engine room, cut off from the main house.

MUNICIPAL HAIL INSURANCE IN ALBERTA.

Owing to the heavy hail insurance losses of 1916, resulting in the break-down of the Government hail insurance scheme, which was unable to pay all awards, provision has been made by an amendment to the act whereby the system of taxation for hail purposes is changed from a flat rate on all assessable lands to a flat rate of 5c. per acre on all assessable lands and an additional rate on all lands under crop, such as will be sufficient, together with the flat rate of 5c. per acre, to pay all hail losses for the year, administration expenses, and unpaid awards of former years. Provision has also been made by legislation whereby the Province has guaranteed a loan to the hail districts so that they may be in a position to pay up all outstanding unpaid awards; such loan to be repaid during the next two years out of the hail tax levied by the hail districts. These arrangements, it is suggested, will get the scheme again on its feet.

Tribulations of the neutral! A notice convening a recent meeting of the Danish Insurance Congress reads as follows:—"Annual meeting, April 27, 7.30. After the meeting, dinner. N.B.—Members are requested to bring their bread tickets (½ ticket for black bread and ½ ticket for white bread)."