

but a very small return to the companies and that any reduction in rates should only be brought about by decreasing the hazard. It would appear that the Kingston City Council has fallen into the same error as the Manufacturers' Association with regard to Government supervision.

Though perhaps unknown to the Municipal authorities of Kingston as it is to many others, there is an Insurance Superintendent who annually examines the books and accounts of the various licensed fire insurance companies, and were the panacea for high rates offered, viz., open competition, adopted, there is little doubt that the Superintendent would have to revoke the license of many a company on account of bankruptcy.

It is absurd to fancy that a Government can interfere with rates in the various branches of commerce. Such a plan has been tried and always with disastrous results.

You cannot compel the fire insurance companies to accept rates to suit the customer and not themselves, any more than you can force a merchant to sell his goods below what he chooses to take.

If the price does not suit in either case the purchaser is quite at liberty to buy elsewhere, or go without. Open competition having no regard to experience in fire insurance would simply mean pure gambling, and the survival of the fittest and in the end many of the policies would be as worthless as the I. O. U's of the gamster.

Should the Kingston City Fathers doubt this let them start one or more fire insurance companies which will prove satisfactorily that there is no "commercial" combine, but we are sure their experience would also show, ere long, that while they may know civic business they do not understand underwriting.

THE LIVERPOOL & LONDON & GLOBE INSURANCE COMPANY.

UNITED STATES BRANCH.

The annual statement of the United States branch of the above great and prosperous company shows among its assets real estate valued at \$1,861,607; United States Government & p.c. bonds, \$809,597; State and city bonds and railroad stocks and bonds, \$3,775,528; bond and mortgage loans, \$3,082,450; bank balances and all other assets, \$2,615,674; a total of \$12,234,048, an increase of \$127,550 as compared with the previous calendar year.

The unearned premiums and all other liabilities aggregate \$6,972,668, leaving a surplus of \$5,262,279, a large part of which is in cash and the balance invested in high-grade securities. The surplus is \$193,388 larger than last year. Mr. Henry W. Eaton is the resident manager.

ÆTNA LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.

The 56th Annual Statement of the Ætna Life Insurance Company shows substantial gains for the year 1905, as will be seen by the report published on a later page. The business of the company is conducted on conservative lines, and by economical methods, which is all the more commendable in these days of fierce competition, when some companies are prone to resort to extravagant methods to obtain business.

The Ætna restricts its operations to the Northern parts of this continent, and as can be seen from the magnitude of its operations, the field seems large enough.

The Montreal Agency under the management of Mr. T. H. Christmas has shown very satisfactory results for past year. The agency has had the distinction of being among the first ten for results of the numerous general agencies of the company throughout the United States and Canada.

BILL TO REGULATE INSURANCE BUSINESS.

A Bill was introduced in the United States Senate on 15th ult., by Senator Dryden, the object of which is the regulation of insurance business by the Federal Government.

The Bill provides for a "Bureau of Insurance" being established in connection with the "Department of Commerce and Labour." This department is to be charged with the execution of this and all other laws that may be passed by Congress for the supervision and regulation of the business of insurance among the several States.

The Act has this passage:

"Policies or any other contracts of insurance are hereby declared to be articles of commerce and instrumentalities thereof."

Senator Dryden is sanguine that this Bill if passed will inaugurate a new era in American insurance, materially enhancing the safety and security of every insurance contract, reduce to a minimum the opportunity for wrong doing and mismanagement and make the American insurance policy the safest, cheapest and best in the world. Referring further to his very important measure, Senator Dryden is reported by "The Insurance Press" to have said, on Monday:

"It follows in broad outlines my bill of the last session, but with very important modifications and additions, which, I believe, meet all reasonable demands for an effective, uniform and economical method of government control of insurance interests."

CONTROLLER OF INSURANCE.

"The bill contains fifty separate provisions, of which the first thirteen relate to the origin of the proposed bureau of insurance in the Department of Commerce and Labour. The bureau is to be in charge of a controller of insurance. In nearly all essentials the bill as far as possible conforms to the organic acts establishing other departments of the Federal government, but in particular the national bank act.

"The provisions of the act apply to all corporations, associations or partnerships engaged in inter-