

and negotiations for the underwriting are now in progress.

Whilst the wholesale dry goods houses appear to have done generally badly last year, the leading retailers have not much to complain of. Taking them in the order of net profit, they are: Harrod's stores, Paquin's, D. H. Evans, Liberty & Co., Thomas Wallis & Co., Jays', Swan & Edgar, and the Bon Marché. Their total net profit for 1903 was over two million dollars, and the average dividend 14 per cent. The value of their stock at the end of the year was \$3,100,000, a figure which certainly shows that sales did not come up to the expectations of the department buyers. One curious side-light flung by most of the reports is that, although customers were generally more numerous last year, they individually spent less. That's where industrial depression told.

INSURANCE.

I am not surprised that Mr. R. L. Hunter has finally lost his case against the income tax commissioners in the person of the Attorney-General. Only a very determined man would have ventured to fight an income tax official, and, it would, in all probability, be a losing hazard from the start. The facts are these:

Mr. H. insured with the London Life for \$7,500. By the policy, it was provided that a moiety of the renewal premium, namely \$165, should, if the assured desired, be advanced by the Association, and should be a first charge on the policy. Year by year he paid £165, and an equal sum was loaned by the office, he being credited in the premium renewal account with the full premium, \$330.

Was he entitled to deduct from his income tax assessment this total premium? The income tax commissioners only allowed him relief to the extent of the cash actually paid by him annually, and to get his rights Mr. Hunter sought the courts of law. Mr. Justice Phillimore gave a verdict in his favour. The commissioners, thereupon, took the case to the Court of Appeal, where the Phillimore decision was reversed, upon which the insurer tried the final tribunal, the House of Lords. The Lord Chancellor there, said that section 54 of the Income Tax Act of 1853 provided that any person who had made an insurance on his life should be entitled to deduct the amount of the annual premium paid by him from the income for which he was liable to be assessed to tax.

The simple question was, how much each year had the plaintiff paid as premium. Obviously \$165. Upon that sum only could he claim relief. The Court of Appeal's decision would, therefore, be upheld.

Latest newcomer amongst British insurance companies is the Personal Accident Insurance Company, with a capital of \$10,000. This does not seem a promising sort of start to make.

Drawing its policyholders from the less opulent section of the middle class, the National Provident Institution does exceedingly well. The whole of the risks assured were retained last year, and, although small policies are generally held to be more expensive to obtain than larger ones, the National Provident is one of the most economically managed offices of all the commission payers.

REBATING AND SIDE-LINE INSURANCE.—One of the most prolific causes of rebating in life insurance seems to have been scarcely touched upon in the multiplicity of opinions expressed on the subject. The solicitor is frequently confronted by the statement that certain companies have agents who solicit insurance among fellow employees in factories and large business establishments.

Such men are usually not particular as to the price received, as they are not dependent upon insurance for support, but merely desire to augment their salaries. In

most cases, if at all, no license is issued to these irregular agents, who, by such methods of securing business, deprive many hard-working authorized insurance men of the opportunities rightfully theirs.

The mere possession of a rate book and blank applications by no means constitutes a real life solicitor. A knowledge of the business is only acquired by experience and hard study. In fact, many incidents necessary to learning the business are disagreeable to those unaccustomed to soliciting. Successful agents have made a study of their occupation.

The complaints on the part of so many policyholders of having received a different form of contract from what they expected are mostly due to the inability of ignorant agents, such as those who take the business as a side-line.

Innumerable reasons could be given for the abolition of the practice of employing men who give only a portion of their time to the business.

STOCK EXCHANGE NOTES.

Tuesday, p.m., March 29, 1904.

A turn in sentiment and decline in prices was seen in New York the beginning of this week, and, as has been the case for some time past, the local market followed New York's lead. The most noticeable feature of Montreal was the almost total cessation of business. While prices were advancing, our market became active, but as soon as they commenced to fall off the trading almost came to a standstill. To-day, however, there was a turn for the better, and prices recovered considerably. The market closed stronger. The same change was evident in New York, where Union Pacific was leading the market and scored a sharp advance during the day. On the whole, considering the dullness prevailing in the early part of the week, there was a fair business done in the local market, and C. P. R. and Montreal Power were the most active stocks. Dominion Coal Common and Dominion Steel Common also came in for a fair amount of attention. C. P. R. advanced a full point from this morning's opening, and this in face of the publication of the earnings for February, and for the period from July 1 to February 29, which show a heavy shrinkage in the net profits. The decrease in February, over the same period last year was \$660,199.88, and from 1st July to February 29, the decrease was \$1,347,453.66. The publication of this statement, while it showed a decrease even larger than expected, was not taken too seriously, and it is felt that the Company has a good opportunity to overcome this between now and the end of their fiscal year. There has been a somewhat firmer feeling on the Dominion Iron stocks lately, and it is no doubt attributable to the expectation that the Government will do something in the way of protection to help the Company. Of course, it is altogether too early to make any definite estimate as to what the nature of the assistance will be. Signs are not wanting, particularly in New York, of a somewhat broader, and a little more active market in the near future.

As far as money is concerned, the situation locally remains unchanged, with supplies ample on call at 5 per cent. In New York the call rate to-day was 1½ per cent. and the London rate was 3½ to 4 per cent.

The quotations for money at continental points are as follows:—

	Market.	Bank.
Paris.....	2½	3
Berlin.....	3½	4
Amsterdam.....	2½	3½
Vienna.....	3	3½
Brussels.....	2½	3½