New York Fire-Insurance Rates.—Local fire insurance rates are still very low, most of the companies doing little or no business. In the rush for business, after the rupture of the Tariff Association, when policies were cancelled by the thousand and one, risks that had been refused before were taken for almost nothing, the companies colected premiums months in advance, and in consequence have little now to do. There are still rumors of withdrawals, and one or two concerns are reported weak, with chances of early retirement. These were clamoring for "open rates" a few months ago, but would gladly enter a tariff association again should one be organized. They could not get in under the old conditions, however, as the most prominent managers are alive to the present situation, and know something of the causes which led to the recent disruption.

What some of the small companies will do if the present state of affairs continues is a question of much interest to insurance men to-day. They will soon find it difficult, it is thought, to reinsure at anything like profitable rates, and in competition with the larger concerns few, if any, depending for support on local business alone can stand the strain. President Driggs, of the old Tariff Association, thinks that the companies must experience heavy losses before conditions improve. He said: "About all the predictions as to the disastrous effects of a rate-war have come true. In the struggle to maintain the volume of premiums companies have written business months ahead, piling up heavy liabilities for little or nothing. Of course, the fire record is marvellous, beyond all explanation in fact, but the day of reckoning will come, and then we shall all realize that indemnity should not be given away."

The organization of an insurance bureau by a well-known brokerage firm has attracted attention during the week. It is the first of the kind to be established, and serves as a clearing-house for companies and agents everywhere.—N. Y. *Evening Post.*

A Flagging Business.—Referring to the craze for flags during the recent war, the *Post* says:—The remarkable activity which came to the bunting and flag industry with the outbreak of the war has largely subsided, and now the manufacturers are beginning to find time to talk of what they have done. Before the war agitation began few flags were to be seen, except on public occasions, besides those raised on public buildings; the stocks in store of flags and "patriotic" materials were not large. But after the blowing up of the "Maine" the demand became something enormous. A superintendent of a large Boston store said the other day of the rush for flags when the war broke out: "Oh, it was something terrible, simply terrible. In the height of the rush there was one manufactory I know of that turned out each day twelve miles of bunting." One house received an order for 100,000 dozen flags, to be sent immediately. A single house in Boston sold 15,000 dozen flags in one day. Some of the largest wholesale orders came from the South. While the demand continues from some quarters, it is reaching more normal limits, and salesmen say that now is the best time to buy a flag, for the stocks on hand are very great and the demand a trifle tardy. The largest sales now being made are of small silk flags and silk patriotic streamers for interior decorations.