

There are two other points in the consideration of the hazard which may affect the rate, namely, the facilities for extinguishing fire, and the probable loss, taking into consideration the proportion the insurance bears to the value of the property insured. The steamer may or may not be in a place where outside help can be obtained. It is claimed that efficiently organized fire corps on each steamer of their furnish adequate protection, and doubtless the trained portion of the crews have done admirable service in the detection and extinguishment of fires—notably on two recent occasions.

But the existence of those outbreaks plainly denotes the inherent hazards as considerable, and should the steamer be on its voyage, the desire to save life, and the panic among passengers would render the best fire appliance far less efficient than on land.

The probable loss on costly and ornamental boats, is large, and unless the insurance be very full, may result in a total loss to the Insurance Companies, though only partial to the Insured.

Well! how came the rate so very low? We don't know exactly why the Insurance Companies "suicided," in this particular case, we only know of general symptoms of recklessness and depression. It may have been an over-dose of broker, or a blow struck in retaliation for some former cutting, but whatever the cause now, it could hardly have been such under the supervision of a Local Board and tariff, unless a majority of the underwriters of this city really believe that 80 c. per cent. is a fair rate for these risks—if even one of these underwriters thinks so, we shall be happy to hear from him, and publish his reasons.

We have made very much fuss out of a very small matter: too much fuss, perhaps, were this the only case, and even then the evil were well nipped in the bud by a column or so of plain talk; but this is only one of many cases, which we use as an illustration. This is regular business now-a-days. Any rate at all seems better than doing a small business. The Companies seem to live by the old saw, "Half a loaf is better than no bread." Unfortunately the half loaf is not a gift, and when the account comes in it is frequently for a burnt batch.

EVERY MAN HIS OWN SURETY.

There is a spirit of independence in this nineteenth century that pervades everything. Men and things stand or fall more by their own merits, than in the days when patronage extended its influence through all classes and conditions. To-day political patronage is the chief remaining evil of a system that crushed self-reliance even in those of genius, and tainted much true born nobility with the shadow of sycophancy.

The man is very base indeed who dreads a debt of gratitude, and very poor in spirit who cannot pay one, for it is fully discharged while he gratefully feels its weight, and it is only when he forgets or denies this friendly obligation that it becomes a tangible liability, and decreases his moral assets. The fear of incurring a financial debt that one may be unable to meet, is a far different affair, and reflects credit upon the mind that is sensitive to the probable loss and discomfort of the creditor. To be independent of any such danger and to obviate possible loss to those, who, through ties of blood or friendship are willing to incur risk as bondsmen, is the object of Guarantee Insurance. For a certain premium paid, a company guarantees to indemnify an employer for any loss caused by the dishonesty or misfortune of an employee, in such a manner as the contract may state. When the premium is paid by the employee himself, it renders him free from what might

become a money obligation to a friend, should his security bonds be forfeited for any reason whether, his crime or misfortune. The assured is not by any means free from liability though his employer be secured from loss; for, should his default, whether criminal or otherwise, come within the grasp of the law, the Guarantee Company can recover from him as far as he has anything to realize from, and secure his punishment to the extent of his crime. The premium paid for this indemnity, therefore, secures the employer for such loss up to the amount of the policy, but in reality, and very justly, only insures for the amount that the loss may exceed the employee's powers of indemnity. It has been thought by some that such a system of guaranteeing the honesty of those in positions of trust, is a premium on dishonesty or carelessness; but to those who understand the working of the business, it is found to have an opposite effect. The corporations that undertake this class of underwriting, have both the means and time, and it is as well, a part of their business, to follow up and punish those who have forfeited their confidence. They are ever awake to any decay in the morality of those whose good conduct they pledge, and by their vigilance are more likely to elevate than depress the standard of honesty.

Thus we see that every man may become his own surety, and rest satisfied that neither his misfortune nor his crime can entangle those dear to him in his fall. In fact, his own good character and ability are his guarantee, for unless these pass favourably under the scrutiny of those accepting the hazard, he cannot give their security to his employers, and may well be considered unworthy of the position to which he aspires.

SOCIETY NOTES AND COMPANY ITEMS.

The Phenix Insurance Company of Brooklyn, N. Y., has re-opened at St. John, N. B., with Mr. J. F. Whitaker as their Agent.

The Directors of the Ottawa Agricultural Insurance Company have made another call of two and one-half per cent. Pity the sorrows of a solvent shareholder.

The Dominion Safety Fund Life Insurance Company, incorporated at the last sitting of the New Brunswick Legislature, has commenced business. The Head Office is at St. John, Mr. J. DeW. Spurr, President.

Mr. Alexander Dickson, General Agent for the Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society, has, in his short career of Insurance Chief, so far gained the confidence of his Company, that they have extended his powers to Manager for the whole Dominion and Newfoundland.

Mr. W. P. Clirehugh, General Manager of the Fire Insurance Association, and the London and Lancashire Life, has been visiting Canada lately. We got up several pyrotechnic displays during his stay, and on his next visit we propose to try an epidemic as a species of Life Insurance entertainment.

The Companies represented by the late Mr. Coote, of St. John, have given their agencies to Mr. E. C. Knight, who for some time past has had business connections with Mr. Coote. We hope this Knight will be ever ready to break a lance in support of good underwriting and paying rates.

The New Brunswick Board of Fire Underwriters has recently been strengthened by the addition of the "Fire Association" of London, "Phenix" of Brooklyn, "Western" of Toronto, and "Royal Canadian," Insurance Companies. The Companies now represented at this Board number eighteen.