

DEPUTATION OF INSURANCE MANAGERS INTERVIEW THE GOVERNMENT.

A deputation consisting of Mr. T. H. Christmas (Aetna Life), Mr. B. Hal Brown (London & Lancashire Life) and Mr. David Burke (Royal Victoria Life) waited on the Quebec Cabinet on Monday at Quebec, with the object of having the taxes on life insurance companies transacting business in this province reduced.

A tax of 1¼ per cent. on the gross premiums is levied by the government each year, in addition to the municipal taxation. This rate was considered by the deputation as being excessive, when compared with Ontario where the taxation is 1 per cent., and in that province the companies are free from municipal taxation.

The Ministers received the deputation very courteously, and listened attentively to their arguments. They assured the managers that the matter would have proper attention at an early date.

NEW LIFE COMPANY.

Ottawa capitalists head the organization of the latest new Life Company, to be called the Protectorate Life Insurance Company of Canada. The bill for the company's charter is before Parliament.

The proposed capital stock is \$1,000,000 divided into 10,000 shares of \$100 each. They are offered to the public for subscription at a premium of \$25 per share.

Financial and General.

THE EFFICIENCY of the Massachusetts anti-rebate law has recently been demonstrated in the conviction of a Cambridge, Mass., life agent. Information that the agent had violated the law was first received by the Massachusetts insurance department, December 4, 1909, and the matter was immediately referred to the state police for investigation. On January 18, the agent was arrested at Manchester, N.H., where he was then employed by another company. He was brought to Boston and indicted on four counts, two for offering rebates and two for allowing rebates, and the next day was released on probation on the payment of costs. On March 24 last, the state police reported that the probation officer had secured evidence that the agent returned to Manchester and was continuing the practice of rebating. He was immediately re-arrested on the old charge and brought back to Boston, where he was tried and fined \$200.

CANADA is primarily an agricultural country and the industries most closely related to agriculture are the first to respond to better times. This was shown by the earnings of the large milling companies in 1909. Following the good crop of 1906, the average surplus earnings on the common stock of the three largest companies was 22.86 p.c. This compares with an average of 10.82 p.c. for the year 1908. The latter earnings are based on the smaller crop of 1907. Thus, with a good crop in 1908 the milling industries showed over double the earnings that they had the previous year. Probably no other industry in the country would respond so readily to improved conditions.

THE IMPORTANCE now attached to economy in the management of life insurance companies makes the following comment from the New York Life's agency bulletin of timely interest:

It is indeed a poor statistician who cannot show the superiority of his company in one or more respects. Expense comparisons at the best are fallacious, because the character of the business transacted is bound to differ. For illustration:

A company writing a large amount of term insurance, with its smaller premium and consequently small commission, would necessarily show to advantage in comparing expenses to insurance in force; likewise, the company having the largest amount of old business would probably show to advantage in comparing expenses to assets, payment to policyholders or reserve. Any comparison of expenses to income, excluding commissions to general agents, would, of course, show in favour of the company operating on the general agency plan, because the general agents' compensation (commission) covers many disbursements that appear under other heads in a company operating on the branch office plan.

Let the work of the statistician go on. In but a short time, there will be at least "57 Varieties" of expense ratios, each company claiming the lowest expense rate.

THE PRACTABILITY of bringing a camera into use as an adjunct to the adjustment of losses is little considered and less appreciated. Few, if any, competent company adjusters have ever employed this means of recording conditions found immediately after a fire or accident. The usual survey of the premises made by company representatives is limited to a bird's eye view of the situation, and takes into consideration so very much at a mere glance, however well the adjuster may be endowed with a "camera eye," the impression is likely to fade into utter worthlessness. Where questions involving physical things are brought forth, the photograph has always been conceded one of the best argument settlers in the world. The camera can be handled so skillfully that questions in supposition are often proven facts, and questions in theory, actual conditions.

MR. REGINALD POLE, the general manager of the Glasgow Assurance Corporation, of Glasgow, has just returned home from a visit to this country. He told a good story of a prominent Glasgow insurance man's prodigal son who returned home one evening to find his father giving a dinner to some insurance friends. "Where have you been, sir?" asked the father. "In hell," replied the son. "Ah! and what did you find there?" "Much the same as I find here; I couldn't see the fire for insurance men."

THE COMPAGNIE D'ASSURANCES GENERALES of Paris, the oldest French insurance company, established in 1810, has decided to enter the United States to conduct a general agency business, making the required deposit of \$200,000 and \$300,000 with trustees. It has appointed the firm of Fred. S. James & Co., of New York, as its United States managers.

THE BANK OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA has opened branches at Huna, Sask., and Saskatoon, Sask.