to the company, which seldom happens, the company will readily give him a year's insurance for nothing and cases have even been known where a few hundred francs in cash have been thrown "into the bargain!"

By the Code Napoleon, considerable responsibilities are thrown upon the individual in the matter of fires. To secure complete protection the owner of a building requires to cover (1) the building, (2) loss of rent, (3) responsibility for tenants' furniture (if let) or contents (if he occupies it himself), (4) neighbours' risk. A tenant requires to cover (1) his risk toward the landlord amounting, if sole tenant, to the entire value of the building, or, if partial tenant, to 15 times the rent plus (if he is a careful man) a further sum on supplementary risk; (2) his risk for rents; (3) his own property, (4) neighbours' risk. Damage from lightning, gas, infernal machine and boiler explosions may all be included in the policy generally on payment of extra premiums, so that the average Frenchman approaches the drawing out of his insurance policy with a considerable feeling of seriousness. Seldom is a policy drawn out without the intervention of a broker—at any rate in the cities.

Among the French fire companies there are two tariff organizations, the *Comité* consisting of three of the oldest and most conservative offices, and the *Syndicat*, consisting of eleven companies. These two bodies work very much, though not always, in harmony, and their tariffs are on the whole almost identical. Outside of these there are three important and a few smaller non-tariff companies, and the mutual societies, who generally operate at tariff rates, less 20 per cent. None of the foreign companies operating in France are tariff, although in some of the ports they have come to an agreement with the French offices as to rates. While the foreign insurance company may open its doors in France with a minimum or formalities and with no deposit requirements, they have so far largely confined their operations to the four principal ports, where there is a large volume of commercial business, and to the manufacturing risks in the northern towns, in neither of which classes, is discounted commission practised.

INSURANCE OPERATIONS IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

European countries where French practice in the matter of fire insurance is predominant are Belgium, Spain and Italy. In Belgium the interests of foreign companies are largely confined to commercial risks in the ports, mainly in Antwerp. Spain has no native companies of outstanding importance, the more virile French offices having dominated their more lethargic Spanish competitors. There are many local mutuals insuring buildings for the most part, and in the aggregate covering a large amount of property. Their success is due in large measure to the excellence of the construction of the buildings, a large number of which, especially in those parts of the country where the Moorish influence remains, are of fireproof construction. There is no tariff organization of any kind and rates generally are very low. Lately a new law has been passed laying irksome requirements upon foreign companies and instituting an insurance department for the control of the companies operating. In Italy, the native proprietary companies are not powerful and with one exception, the mutuals are small, so that the position of the French companies is important and their methods predominate, while Austrian companies also have a strong hold. There is one tariff organization, composed of seven leading Italian companies, with a general tariff for industrial risks applicable all over the country. For the country generally there is no tariff for simple risks; each company publishes its own scale of rates but these, to quote an Italian manager, "competition compels us to ignore."

In Switzerland the Cantonal insurance departments cover, in many cases obligatorily, all the buildings and in some cases all the contents. So that foreign companies have not been able to obtain a very strong footing. In Alsace and Lorraine French practice continues to predominate, though German offices are little by little establishing their position.

In the only other Latin country of Europe, Portugal, English insurance interests are important. Even there the stress of competition is being felt and rates are going down. But still, says Mr. Robertson, insurance methods in Portugal are generally very primitive, and business is carried on in many respects as it was in England fifty years ago. One curious feature of the law is that where there are policies on a risk issued at different dates, the earlier policies must pay first, the later policies paying only any excess. But the effect of this law is generally nullified by special clauses in the policies.

THE GERMAN INSURANCE DEPARTMENT.

Among the Teutonic and Scandinavian nations of Europe, there are not the same striking differences from English practice as in those countries where French influence predominates. Long term policies with annual payments are, however, frequent in Germany, and there is a tendency to take out policies for a number of years, five premiums being paid in advance and one year's premium being allowed as discount. In the Hansa towns (Hamburg, Bremen and Lubeck) foreign offices have a strong hold, British offices operating very largely in these towns and on very much the same lines as in England. To a large extent insurance business, especially in Hamburg, is done on the Bourse. In the German Empire generally the business is largely confined to native offices. The German offices are numerous, and the larger of them wealthy and powerful. "Their methods are sound," writes Mr. Robertson, "and they are kept in close control by the cast iron rule of the Imperial Insurance Department, which exercises over native and foreign countries alike a close supervision. The inquisitorial requirements in the way of details and the autocratic spirit with which these requirements are enforced, give the German Imperial Insurance Department the unenviable notoriety of being the most tyrranous institution known to the insurance world, and its reputation fully explains the reverential awe with which its dictums are received, not only by the men on the spot, but even by officials at headquarters of foreign companies."