

Neither the legislature nor the courts are justified in interfering with rights acquired in connection with such a contract, except for the very gravest reasons." An important point in this connection is that, if a policy is invalidated by being judged to be contrary to the Gambling Act, it is cancelled, and no person has a right to any benefit from it; the company, however, has received the premiums called for by such policy, and is relieved of all liability on account of them. This suggests a question as to the relation of a company to a policy issued by itself which infringes the Gambling Act. This relation is highly anomalous, as a company is placed by law in a position to break the law, and profit by it, for, as Mr. Macaulay said: "The company issuing the policy is the only party that has a right to object to the policy. I presume that in Canada the Crown and in the United States the State would have the same right, but that right is purely theoretical, since it can hardly be conceived that the Crown would step in and prohibit a company from paying the amount assured by a policy, if it desired to do so. The practical effect therefore is that the company, and the company alone, has the right to take advantage of a lack of assurable interest. Furthermore, if a company issues a policy with the full knowledge of the facts, and therefore cannot plead ignorance, I doubt very much indeed if the courts would uphold it in afterwards endeavoring to repudiate its liability under that policy. This point is important because if a company chooses to issue a policy with its eyes open, it is probable that no one thereafter can object to the validity of such a policy on the ground of lack of assurable interest." In closing his remarks, the speaker quoted a case to show that, a policy in favour of a wife was no longer hers after being divorced, as the Court held that, it was made in her favour as a wife, and as she no longer stood in that relation she was no longer entitled to it, but it reverted to the estate of the assured.

THE EQUITABLE LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

The 38th annual statement of the above gigantic Company is published on another page of this issue. The following table gives an exhibit of the Company's business in 1897, compared with 1896:—

FINANCIAL MOVEMENT.

	1896.	1897.	1897. Increase + Decrease -
Premiums Net.....	\$ 36,089,358	\$ 38,661,274	+\$2,473,916
Interest, Rents, etc.....	8,921,700	10,008,996	+ 1,087,296
Total Income.....	45,011,058	48,672,270	+ 3,561,212
Payments to Policy holders.	21,917,439	21,106,314	- 811,125
Other Disbursements.....	8,066,083	8,536,964	+ 469,981
Cont. gent Guarantee Fund.	3,500,000	+ 3,500,000
Total Outgo.....	30,004,422	33,143,278	+ 3,138,856
Excess of Income over Outgo	15,006,636	15,428,992	+ 422,356
Total Assets.....	216,773,947	236,876,308	+20,102,361
Policy reserves and other liabilities.....	173,352,267	186,333,133	+12,980,866
Surplus to Policy holders...	43,421,680	50,543,175	+ 7,121,495

MOVEMENT OF POLICIES.

Sums assured	\$123,961,269	\$156,955,693	+\$32,994,424
Sums assured thereunder,	\$915,102,070	\$951,165,837	+\$36,063,767

The increase of \$2,473,916 in net premiums is a very striking feature in the 1897 returns, the more so as in 1896 there was a decline in this item, as compared with 1895, of \$111,307. The decline was no doubt caused chiefly by the Presidential Election, but it looks as though the highly satisfying report made by the Superintendent of Insurance for the State of New York had given a fresh impetus to the business of the Equitable by the assurance it gave that "all the affairs of this vast insurance corporation are in a sound and prosperous condition." The increase! income from interest, rents, etc., of \$1,087,296, is also a notable feature. This source of income last year reached the enormous amount of \$10,008,996, which is about two millions in excess of the income from same sources in 1895. This sum last year came within \$1,700,000 of the total death claims, and exceeded the total working expenses of the Company by \$1,500,000. Besides death claims, there were disbursements for Matured and Discounted Endowments of \$1,160,578; Annuities, \$515,692; Surrender values, \$3,157,494; Matured Tontine values, \$2,205,190; and Dividends to Policy-Holders of \$2,343,896. The total sum paid to policy-holders in 1897 was \$21,106,314; for working expenses there was paid \$8,536,963, and \$3,500,000 was carried to the Contingent Guarantee Fund. The total disbursements of the year amounted to \$33,143,277. The total income of the Equitable now stands at \$48,672,270, showing an advance over 1895 of \$4,275,827, and over 1896 of \$3,561,212. The total assets made a bound upward last year from \$216,773,947 to \$236,876,308, an increase of \$20,102,361. The Reserve, or Assurance Fund, on all existing policies, on the legal standard on which it is calculated that future earnings will be at the rate of 4 per cent., amounts to \$184,191,538, other liabilities are \$2,141,595, making the total liabilities, \$186,333,133. As the assets amount to \$236,876,308, there is a surplus over liabilities of \$50,543,174. If the Company's investments and properties only yielded 3 per cent. in the future, the surplus would be \$29,014,300. The Equitable has now assurance in force to the extent of \$951,165,837. Such prodigious business demands financial skill, with administrative and executive talent of the highest order. The Equitable has a President in Mr. H. B. Hyde, whose ability in these respects has proved equal to such responsibilities as devolve upon the chief officer of one of the greatest financial corporations in the world. His colleagues, too, are men of recognized eminence in the financial sphere. Its Montreal Manager, Mr. S. P. Stearns, is held in the highest esteem, and very worthily and efficiently represents this distinguished and remarkable institution.