

however, shows an increase for 1892 over 1891 of over one and a half per cent., and over the average ratio for the six years (which was 59 per cent.) of not quite four and a half per cent., which is anything but encouraging. The life business of the Canadian companies also shows a very gratifying increase. The new issues for 1892 (including the Great West of Winnipeg, a new company) were about \$28,245,000, against about \$23,200,000 in 1891—an increase of nearly \$5,000,000 during the year, including perhaps \$2,000,000 done outside of Canada. This is certainly an encouraging record for our companies. Elsewhere we print the preliminary Insurance Department statement of the life companies, covering principal features, the figures relating to new business in 1892, and insurance in force being substantially the same as given by us in our issue for February 1st. It will be seen that the net gain in insurance in force has been \$13,208,562.

**The Universal
Recognition
of Insurance.**

THERE is unquestionably a growing sentiment among the people of both the Old World and the New in favor of State-aided and State-controlled insurance. Germany has in operation its government scheme; Great Britain has its now rusty life insurance system, and is constantly engaged in suggestions and discussions regarding some feasible plan of old-age insurance; the Dominion Parliament has before it and will likely pass a civil service insurance measure; the Quebec Legislature is playing in a similar role; and at the present writing four of the States of the American Union have before their legislative bodies bills for turning the State governments practically into insurance corporations. Massachusetts proposes to deal in annuities; Ohio is to assume the adjustment, through county boards, of all fire losses; Minnesota proposes to raise a fund by general taxation for the payment of losses, of course involving insurance by the State; while Wisconsin has a similar scheme before its legislature. And there are yet forty States to hear from. It is unlikely that any of the schemes proposed will ever get further than the committee room, but the persistent effort, growing each year, for the promotion of similar State-controlled schemes is significant. Among other things it is significant of the universal recognition of insurance in its various forms as an indispensable factor in modern society.

**Fire Departments
and Improved
Service.**

THE efficiency of fire departments is one of the present questions of vital importance alike to the public and the fire insurance companies. Great improvements have unquestionably been made during the past few years in fire-extinguishing apparatus of all kinds, in water supply, and in the organization and discipline of the fire-fighting forces. And yet, the proportion of fire loss to property value in the aggregate seems to be on the increase, especially in the United States. Improvements have been made in building construction, and the agitation for further improvement is a healthy sign; but with better fire departments and better buildings, increasing hazards

have also grown apace, such as tall buildings, electric appliances and obstructive barricades of poles and wires on the principal streets. In view of all these things, the suggestion discussed at the annual meeting of chief fire engineers of the United States, that the captain of every fire company should have displayed at headquarters complete plans of every large building in his district, to be carefully studied by the men, is a valuable and timely one. Every fireman can know and ought to know perfectly the details of construction, external and internal, of every large building in order to act promptly and efficiently in case of fire. If the firemen, or even the captains of companies, had been familiar with the internal arrangements of the buildings burned out last week in this city, far different results might have been recorded.

**A Sermon
in a
Sentence.**

THE presiding genius of a local paper in an Iowa town is credited with saying of a townsman, whose advertisement as agent of one of the oldest and best life companies appeared in his columns, that "Brown sells life insurance which is as certain as death." That terse sentence embodies the pith of the most elaborate treatise, actuarial or otherwise, ever written on level premium life insurance. In Great Britain there exist more than a score of life insurance companies, founded on the clearest mathematical verities, all of which have paid losses to the survivors throughout two and some of them throughout four generations, and to-day are stronger than ever. On this side the Atlantic one company has celebrated its semi-centennial, and after paying during its history three hundred and forty-six millions of dollars to policyholders has on hand assets for the payment of future claims amounting to a hundred and seventy-five millions more, and is stronger with increasing age. More than twenty other companies are from twenty-five to forty-five years old, every one of which has paid millions for death claims, and is stronger than ever. The payments of all these have been and will be "as certain as death," because all their transactions are based upon the immutable laws governing human mortality and the unvarying mathematics of compound interest. If these companies sell insurance which is as certain as death, the assessment concerns may be said to sell insurance which is as uncertain as life.

**The Prevalence
of
Agent-Stealing.**

WE are in receipt of a letter from the manager in the Maritime Provinces of one of our best life companies, heartily commending our course in denouncing the growing practice of agent-stealing, and furnishing us with particulars of an attempt recently made by the manager of a large American company to seduce to its service a general agent of the company first above referred to. The manager of the company says, that in an interview with the would-be seductive manager, that gentleman "freely admitted his intention to indulge in the practice of agent-stealing to any extent he chose, and to put no curb upon himself or any of