If the proposed law were extended to the several States, in which the aggregate premiums of the foreign companies last year were over $41,000,000, the tax required would amount to over *two millions of dollars*, while the tax exacted from American companies on the same amount of premiums would be only about $71,000.

We are glad to notice that the manifest injustice of such a law is not only clearly apprehended by the officers and managers of nearly all the American companies, among which are the oldest and strongest, like the Aetna, the Hartford, the Home of New York and the Phenix of Brooklyn, but that a vigorous protest has been made against the passage of the bill in New York by a committee appointed by the board of underwriters of New York city, which, with one dissenting vote—that of President Moore of the Continental—passed a resolution condemning the bill. It will be recalled also that, at the annual meeting in May last of the National Board of Fire Underwriters, this kind of discriminating tax legislation was denounced by resolution as unjust and impolitic. Then and recently, prominent officials of American companies have frankly said that if they cannot successfully compete, on their own ground, with foreign companies, on equal terms, they are quite willing to go to the wall. Before the committee of the New York legislature recently, Vice-President Washburn of the Home, and others, bore testimony to the honorable methods of the foreign companies as competitors, and declared that the business interests of the country are benefited by their presence.

These gentlemen are not afraid of honorable competition, and in common with the reflecting fair-minded portion of the public evidently remember that, when the great Chicago fire occurred, five foreign companies promptly paid for losses almost six millions of dollars, and a proportionately large sum a year later on account of the big Boston fire. They also evidently recognize the fact that, so far as the government is concerned, in Canada and in Great Britain, American insurance companies are admitted freely as competitors on equal terms with their own companies. The latest indications are that, both in New York and in Massachusetts, the proposed discriminating tax bills will never get beyond the committees to whom they have been referred, while in Ohio the result is in doubt. It is worthy of mention also in this connection that a test case has been made up in Iowa by the Scottish Union and National, by which the courts are to pass upon the legality and constitutionality of the tax law in force above referred to.

The apostles of the anti-foreign crusade over the border are exceedingly active however, and have caused a bill to be introduced in the New York legislature prohibiting foreign insurance companies from owning the stock of, or in any way controlling, any other company in this country, the purpose, of course, being to strike a blow at the foreigners which have organized companies under the New York laws. Beaten in their discriminating tax scheme, these insurance jingoes hope to injure their foreign competitors by this new method. There is also a pretty strong movement we notice, which, unlike the discriminating tax movement, is advocated by several of our American insurance exchanges, to prohibit by statute the maintenance of re-insurance treaties with unadmitted foreign or other unadmitted companies in the several States, by which large lines of risk are taken and then re-insured. While, in case such legislation is effected, all companies, American as well as foreign, will be subject to the restriction proposed, the prohibition would bear mainly on the foreign companies. All the movements above referred to afford evidence of a sentiment among the people across the border favorable to the enactment of laws discriminating against all foreign companies. Whether that sentiment will grow beyond the present stage remains to be seen, but that it is not sufficiently strong to-day to justify such legislation as the tax bill contemplates seems to be pretty certain.

A NEW DEPARTURE IN BANKING.

At one of the Annual Meetings of the Canadian Bankers' Association, a General Manager, when discussing the present method of issuing special Deposit Receipts, outlined an idea of his own whereby Banks might be enabled to make special provision for long term deposits by the issue of interest-bearing Bonds, which should be a first charge upon the assets of a Bank after its circulation is redeemed.

The details furnished were extremely vague, and received little attention. But the following extract from the March number of *American Investments* tells of a mode of dealing with depositors which has indeed the glamour of novelty, and we shall watch for the operation of the plan with some curiosity as to the result of such a departure from the beaten track in banking:—

On and after January 1, 1898, the DeWitt County National Bank will discontinue the issuing of interest-bearing certificates of deposits, and thereafter, at its regular semi-annual dividend days in July and January, after having paid its ordinary operating expenses, and having declared its regular semi-annual dividends to its stockholders, not exceeding 5 per cent. upon its capital stock, it will distribute any remaining profits among its depositors pro rata in proportion as their average daily deposits may have been for the six months immediately prior thereto, except that no dividend will be declared to depositors whose average daily balance for the six months shall not equal the sum of $100; and provided, further, that as the business of the bank may increase under the liberal offer thus made, a sum not exceeding 5 per cent. per annum of the capital stock may, at such times as the board of directors deem advisable, and at such semi-annual dividend periods, be passed to the sinking fund of the bank, but no surplus shall be thus passed to the sinking fund, so as to decrease the semi-annual dividend to depositors below 2 per cent. per annum.