

Premier Sifton, of Alberta, has given notice in the legislature, of a bill dealing with hail insurance. It is understood that this will provide for the abolition of government hail insurance as at present, and will instead allow the formation of private companies under government control.

* * *

Rowland P. Warrington, living near Lewes, Del., lost his barn by a fire of unknown origin. It is a singular thing that on the afternoon before the fire Mr. Warrington had cancelled his fire insurance policy. The fire insurance agents have since kept busy writing policies and examining those already in force.—N. Y. Journal of Commerce.

* * *

On and after February 7, Winnipeg will be the chief centre for the Sovereign Life Assurance Company, which at present has his headquarters in Toronto. Offices for the company have been secured in the Canada building, Donald street, and Dr. Meiklejohn, general manager, and the other chief officers of the Company will take up their residence in Winnipeg.

* * *

Superintendent Hotchkiss suggests in his newly issued annual report, the adoption by the Legislature of certain uniform amendments suggested by the National Convention of Insurance Commissioners; one, which will prevent runs on insurance companies in panic times through the so-called loan and surrender value clauses; another, to stop the practice of dating back life policies beyond the age of the insured at the time the policy is taken; and the third, to prohibit the furnishing by companies or agents of estimates of future dividends on participating policies.

* * *

The following novel illustration of western hustle and enterprise appears in the staid columns of the Canada Gazette:—"Notice is hereby given that application will be made to the Parliament of Canada, at the present session thereof, for an Act to incorporate a company under the name of 'The Universal Eyesight Insurance Company,' with power to carry on the business of insurance in so far as eyes and eyesight are concerned and provide for indemnity in case of loss of sight or injury to eyes by any cause whatsoever, with head office in the City of Edmonton, in the Province of Alberta."

* * *

The question is mooted whether the amount now paid for insurance—particularly in the fire and casualty fields—is not, in its expense factors, greater than the service performed by home office and field representatives is economically worth. This question is fundamental and of the highest importance, although strangely enough, it is impossible to find anywhere a scientific discussion of it. From the asking of the question to the easy conclusion that government—now growing yearly more and more paternal—can do the work better than it is at present done by corporate insurance, and thus these expense factors be reduced, the step is not long. It is, indeed, but part of a general movement toward the lowering of prices as to all commodities of public necessity, through the reduction of profits, salaries and commissions. Corporate insurance should be the first to recognize these conditions and the danger that it runs

if they are longer allowed to continue. In short, that the people may be satisfied, through rates that are economically just, why may not government—leaving the loss and reserve elements of the rate to be determined by those skilled in their scientific ascertainment, namely, trained actuaries in the different fields of insurance—set limits on the expense factor, either arbitrarily, as was done in the life field, or, after investigation, by departmental regulation—William H. Hotchkiss.

* * *

STATEMENT OF ACCIDENTS DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER, 1911, BY INDUSTRIES AND GROUPS OF TRADES.

Trade or Industry.	Killed.	Injured.	Total.
Agriculture.....	5	13	18
Fishing and hunting.....	1	1	2
Lumbering.....	4	8	12
Mining.....	14	14	28
Railway construction.....	1	1	2
Building trades.....	9	31	40
Metal trades.....	5	42	47
Woodworking trades.....	1	7	8
Printing and allied trades.....	..	2	2
Clothing.....	..	2	2
Textile.....	1	2	3
Food and tobacco preparation.....	2	2	4
<i>Transportation:—</i>			
Steam railway service.....	14	26	37
Electric railway service.....	..	3	3
Navigation.....	7	3	10
Miscellaneous.....	4	17	21
Public employees.....	2	1	3
Miscellaneous skilled trades.....	10	16	26
Unskilled labour.....	5	3	8
Total.....	82	194	276

* * *

DANGERS OF LIABILITY MUTUALS.

Business men who are solicited to become members of the mutual companies to carry liability insurance risks, which are being promoted in many states as a result of the new compensation law, should pay careful attention to the individual liability they must assume as partners in an insurance concern.

This liability is serious enough in fire insurance companies, as thousands have learned to their cost, and may not be known until years after the insurance has expired and the transaction has been forgotten. The situation is very much more serious in the liability field, however, owing to the deferred liability which attaches to that business. In a fire mutual the loss is known when it occurs, although the mutual policyholder may not learn till years later that he was responsible for a share of the loss. In a mutual liability company, however, the loss itself may not develop until years after the accident, and may not become a claim payable until twenty years afterwards, under the liberal laws of many states, and the delays of the courts.

During all that time, however, the solvent member of a liability mutual is responsible for his share of claims arising under losses which may have occurred nearly a generation before, and unless he is judgment-proof, can be held for payment. Such a situation would seriously impair the credit of many business men were it clearly understood, since it is an indefinite, unknown and greatly deferred liability which must be reckoned with. For that reason, business men need to study the responsibilities of mutual insurance with even greater care in the liability line than in the fire branch.—The Insurance Post.