

FIDELITY (FIRE) UNDERWRITERS

The Fidelity (Fire) Underwriters of New York operating throughout Canada, whose policies are assumed half by the Fidelity-Phenix Fire Insurance Company and half by the Continental Insurance Company of New York, whose combined semi-annual statement appears on another page, is a distinctly separate organization from the parent companies, in so far as its management is concerned, both in the making of treaties, and in the acceptance of risks, and in this respect it differs from some Companies, affiliated underwriters.

Policy-holders in Canada of The Fidelity (Fire) Underwriters have the protection of immense resources, as revealed by the statement under review, which shows combined assets of \$63,757,175 and a surplus to policy-holders of the combined companies amounting to \$31,574,008, and comment on such security is unnecessary. The Fidelity Underwriters is already well established throughout the Dominion, with a strong organization under the management of Mr. W. E. Baldwin, Montreal, and its high reputation for service both to agents and policy-holders has assured it a successful career.

NEW YORK STATE INSURANCE FUND TO BE INVESTIGATED

Much interest is attracted by the latest developments in connection with the criticisms of Mr. Jeremiah F. Connor, the commissioner appointed by Gov. Alfred E. Smith for the purpose of examining into the affairs of the State Industrial Commission in relation to the State Insurance Fund. He has filed his report, in which he makes the following criticisms against the management of the fund.

Collection of premiums, auditing of payrolls, the payment of dividends to employers in the special groups, and the lack of payment of dividends to employers in the general groups, special treatment of special groups, method of experience rating, treatment of claimants, discrimination against certain physicians, and medical treatment of injured employees.

Mr. Connor concludes his report as follows: "What I have discovered is only a scratch on the surface. The State fund has never been properly audited by an outside actuary or accountant since first constituted. I recommend that the whole State Insurance Fund be investigated from start to finish by a competent actuarial accountant."

As a result of Mr. Connor's investigation, Governor Smith has ordered the actuarial investigation of the State Insurance Fund, and has authorized the appointment of Mr. Miles M. Dawson, the eminent actuary, as special investigator, under the Moreland Act.

A NEW ERA FOR INSURANCE AGENTS.

The July issue of the Journal of the Corporation of Insurance Brokers denotes the beginning of a

new era for insurance brokers and agents, for it contains a record of the examinations which candidates must pass before they can be admitted as members of the Corporation. The examinations, as the Journal justly remarks, are evidence that the pioneer work of the Corporation is almost completed, and that the members realise that their right to exist as brokers lies in their ability to give the public the soundest advice and service. The examinations will, indeed, raise the status of the insurance broker to something like a professional level. Some of the more enterprising vendors of hair restoring lotions recommend them to the public by way of pictorial advertisements, wherein we see the patient as he was before the treatment and as he is after it. Someone should perform a similar service for the insurance agent—the evolution from the chrysalis to the butterfly.

The insurance business has changed and the agent has changed with it. A business that was once simple and limited in range has now become complex and varied beyond the dreams of our ancestors. The general insurance agent of earlier days was half a mendicant and often a failure in other walks of life, glad to pick up small commissions by the good grace of his friends. It was an easy business to turn one's hand to, because it was then simple and elementary in form and limited in scope, and the chief quality then required in the agent was not knowledge and experience but merely persistence as a salesman. But other days other manners. A successful insurance agent of the present day must be a man of many parts. A good salesman he should always be, but he must also possess a working knowledge of many branches of modern insurance, including fire, life, employers' liability, marine, accident, and a large number of subordinate ramifications. The Corporation of Insurance Brokers was the natural outcome of this change. It is, so to speak, the trades union of insurance agents, and their alma mater.

The Evening Standard recently remarked that "even the best companies are very lax in nominating agents. Anybody can become an agent for an insurance company and draw his commission even if he has nothing to do with insurance and knows nothing about it." To some extent this remark is justified, and the practice of which complaint is made is due to the fact that some insurance companies are still living in the past. The mere capacity to write one's name on a proposal should not entitle one to rank as an insurance agent, and it is the legitimate mission of the Corporation of Insurance Brokers to remedy such abuses.—Policy Holder.