

2. To allow the rate of duty on wheat to remain as at present: and to increase the rate of duty on flour to 75 or 80c. per bbl.

3. To allow the rate of duty on wheat to remain as at present; and impose an *ad valorem* duty of 20 per cent. on flour, so as to correspond with the rate upon flour charged by the United States Government.

By the adoption of the first proposition, it is contended, the protection to the farmer would be increased. It is a pure delusion to talk of giving the farmer protection on his wheat. England is the market for his surplus, and the price current there fixes the price here and makes all attempts to raise it by legislation futile.

Nevertheless, we should be glad to see the allegations of the millers' petition subjected to an impartial scrutiny.

MANUFACTURERS' LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.

The Manufacturers' Life has made in one respect, a phenomenal record. It has secured a great volume of business; and in this particular has a record which has not, we believe, been equalled by any Canadian company. But the satisfaction which might be felt in this achievement is sadly dimmed by the discovery that more than three-quarters of the premium income of the year—\$85,891 out of \$115,714—has been expended in commissions, salaries, fees, and other expenses of organization and management, to say nothing of death claims and re-assurances, the former of which, happily, are light. The report deals in a spirit of excessive frankness with the impairment of capital, treats it as a matter of no concern, in fact almost glories in it. The importance of getting a large amount of paying business on the books is emphasized and the liberal expenditure of means to accomplish this purpose is defended by the management. It is well to be enterprising; it is proper to be frank; but we should have preferred to see a different tone taken with respect to the position and prospects of the company. It is quite true that other life companies before this one have found, in their earlier years, their capital impaired, and have not only made good the impairment but gone on thereafter with increasing prosperity. But this was not achieved, and is never likely to be achieved, by what may be termed the policy of "Hurrah! boys" pursued by the Manufacturers. The whole tenor of the directors' report, and the speech of the president at the annual meeting, appear intended to justify what we must call the extravagant and sometimes reckless methods of the company. Indeed, the report winds up with a panegyric upon all and sundry who have helped to bring about what is termed "this most satisfactory state of things."

One is impelled to ask, why, if things are all so satisfactory, did the managing director, Mr. Carlile, resign, as he has done since the meeting? If the company were as contented with the state of affairs as the report makes out, why not go on in the same manner? The fact appears to be that while every one recognizes Mr. Carlile's energy in organization, his ingenuity and success in gathering in life risks,

no one is found to pretend that he equally displayed these qualities in supervising the office, in correspondence, and in the matters of technique which are of such moment in laying the foundation of a great company. The late manager attempted too much in these respects. Although, to use a complimentary expression in which he took some pride, he was "an iron horse at work," he could not do the work of a full team. And yet there was, and is, work for a team; indeed, the team must be provided, if the work is to be properly done.

There is a great future for the Manufacturers' Life if its management shall only be alive to the necessity of adequate machinery to ensure that future. It is not enough to work eighteen hours a day and get in millions of business: trained skill must be brought to bear, classifying it, apportioning the premiums upon it, economizing the expense of it. Besides, it is quite possible to accept a perilous proportion of the business offering. Discrimination in accepting and rejecting risks is, in life assurance, essential to success. And, by no means the least important, that part of the mechanism which mainly brings the grist to the mill, the agents, must be treated with the consideration they deserve. A manager of the best actuarial skill and experience, of decided firmness and honesty of purpose, and economical enough not to pay for risks more than they are worth, would be the best possession for the Manufacturers to acquire at this stage. Such a man, assisted by the undoubted ability of Mr. Carlile outside, would secure the confidence and stability necessary to future success, and should before many years place the company in the proud position which its many friends and its influential directorate doubtless wish to see it occupy.

THE METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE.

Some account of the duties and performances of the fire brigade of London, England, and of the machinery it employs, may prove of interest to our insurance readers. The report of the fire brigade of that great city for 1888 is a pamphlet of 46 pages, over the signature of Capt. Eyre M. Shaw (who by the way resided in Toronto, some time in the "fifties"). The brigade responded to 2,693 alarms, of which 532 were false and 121 resulted in serious damage. There were fewer fires by 375 within the Metropolitan District in 1888 than during the preceding year, or a decrease of 50 on the average for the past ten years. Human life was seriously endangered in 178 cases; 48 proving fatal. The engines of the brigade made 32,384 journeys, aggregating 61,629 miles. The water used amounted to 9,000,000 gallons or 40,100 tons; just about what No. 8 engine of the Toronto Water Works pumps in a single day. One-third of this came from the River Thames and the docks. Among the appliances employed were no fewer than 158 steam and 85 hand engines, besides floating engines for wharf protection. The brigade made use of fire escapes, coal carts, and other apparatus, with thirty and

a half miles of hose, carried on 90 carts and vans. It required 591 firemen, 16 pilots, 67 coachmen, and 131 horses, to handle these appliances. Firemen were injured in 96 cases, of which 4 proved fatal.

The principal causes to which were attributed the 1,988 more important fires are set down as follows: lamps 276, sparks from grates 123, gas brackets and other dangers from the use of gas 129. There were 560 fires from unknown causes, while only one is declared to have been incendiary. The largest number of fires took place in the month of January, the least in August, there being a difference of 55 between the extremes. Most fires occurred between 9 and 10 p.m.; fewest between 8 and 9 a.m. The four closing months of the year saw the greatest loss of life, yet, singularly enough, the greatest sacrifice of life did not occur contemporaneously with the largest destruction of property.

Toronto has about 3½ firemen to every one employed in the capital of the Empire if the relative sizes of the cities are taken into account, and were London as well supplied with hose reels she would have about 400, or five times as many as at present. When it is considered that within many warehouses in London, at certain seasons of the year, stocks of merchandise are assembled aggregating values of from \$2,000,000 to \$3,500,000, it can be easily credited that the veteran fire-fighter, Capt. Shaw, now in his 64th year, yet still directing this large fire-extinguishing force with all his old-time energy, does not overstate matters when he says, in concluding his report, that, "taking into consideration the smallness of the force, and the amount of work accomplished, it will be seen that the brigade has gone through heavy and continuous labor during the past year."

THE INDEPENDENT ORDER OF FORESTERS.

CONTINUED.

That the death-rate is likely to run higher than the American Experience Table, in the case of assessment societies of ten to twenty years of age, is conspicuously shewn by the following table, copied from page 7 of the December number of the *Fraternal Record*, published in the interest of such societies at Memphis, Tenn. On that page are given the assessments, apart from expense charges, at each age from 18 to 64 of the following six societies, viz.:—Knights of Pythias, A.O.U.W., Knights of Honor, Knights and Ladies of Honor, Am. Legion of Honor, and Royal Arcanum. Then follows a schedule showing the average cost of the whole six, age by age, measured by the American Experience Table. We copy the schedule for fifteen years, from age 40 to age 54, which is as follows:—

Age of Member.	Average Cost per \$1,000.	Rate per \$1,000 Am. Exp. Table.
40	\$13 46	\$ 9 79
41	13 69	10 01
42	13 89	10 25
43	14 11	10 52
44	14 33	10 83
45	14 90	11 16
46	15 57	11 56
47	16 40	12 00
48	17 41	12 51