

the liabilities of large companies, but it felt that if this amount deposited could not be withdrawn it would afford an absolute guarantee to the policy-holders of being always able to proceed against companies in the courts of this country. The committee, therefore, recommended that every company should be required to maintain this deposit of \$100,000 permanently, so long as its policies continue outstanding in this country.

The committee also feels that the appointment of British trustees to act for foreign companies is highly desirable not only in the interest of policy-holders, but in the interest of the companies themselves. The committee believes that experience has proved that the best means of guarding the interests of the policy-holders of all insurance companies is by insisting on the fullest openness in the accounts of such companies. Therefore, the committee recommends that all insurance companies, whether foreign or British, be required to furnish the Board of Trade with full revenue accounts, balance sheets and valuation statements of their business, showing at the same time the expenses for management, and that, further, the Board be empowered to vary from time to time the forms of questions insurance companies are called upon to answer and of the returns made by them, and also to insist that the answers be in every respect complete and accurate, and also on a return to make it clear how far the funds of any foreign company are subject to preferential claims in any country in which it transacts business. The amount of its foreign business and the business actually transacted in Great Britain should be carefully distinguished, but the committee does not consider it necessary that each company shall make a separate valuation of its foreign and British business because the assurance fund in every country should be liable for all policies alike.

In conclusion the committee considers that it is most desirable to provide a statement, by foreign and British companies, of the market value of the securities held by them.

COMMERCIAL UNION ASSURANCE COMPANY, LTD., AND THE EARTHQUAKE CLAUSE.

The Commercial Union Assurance Co., Ltd., has filed the following answer, in the United States Circuit Court, in the suit of Thomas J. Bergin against the company. The suit was brought to recover \$6,500 on the policy of insurance on a building which was destroyed in a conflagration following the earthquake.

The answer sets forth that had it not been for the earthquake Bergin's building would not have burned. It is recited also that the shocks of April 18, prostrated numerous buildings and partly knocked down others, that the electric light and power wires were broken by the shocks and set fire to woodwork and other inflammable substances,

that several such original fires caused by earthquakes spread until fire reached plaintiff's house.

It is alleged further that San Francisco at that time possessed an efficient fire department and adequate supply of water, but that the earthquake broke mains and pipes, rendering the fire department useless and causing original fires to spread to the house of the plaintiff, which would not have been burned had it not been for the earthquake. The defendants deny, therefore, that they are liable for any losses and that the earthquake clause in the policy shields them.

LABOUR SITUATION IN SAN FRANCISCO.

Something like three hundred millions of dollars must be spent in the rebuilding of San Francisco, at least some forty thousand additional workmen skilled and unskilled are required.

According to the "Argonaut" the labour situation has become serious.

It is not a question of wages, for the highest wages ever known in the history of the world are now being paid in San Francisco. A minimum wage for labourers on railroad work and in warehouses is only \$2.25 a day. Cement workers get \$5, hod-carriers \$4, cabinet-makers, \$3.50, millmen \$3.50, plasterers \$6, stonecutters \$4.75, carpenters lathers \$6, shinglers \$4, painters \$4, fresco painters \$5, paper-hangers \$4, plumbers \$5, machinists \$3.75, tanners \$4, sheet metal workers \$4, glaziers \$4, stationary engineers \$4. There is a very strong demand at high wages for teamsters and electricians.

A SOUTH AMERICAN VIEW OF THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

In the "Gaceta Commercial," of Lima, Peru, we find an article on the real meaning of the Monroe Doctrine and the relations of Peru to the United States, marked by frankness and lack of "patriotic blindness." Commenting on an article sent the "Gaceta" by its correspondent in New York, the writer claims that the United States will be actuated in any quarrel that may arise in South America only by a desire to secure the quickest possible settlement of the matter, so that commerce may be resumed. The New York correspondent writes that, while Uncle Sam will not interfere in the least with regular warfare, there can be no doubt that he would put an end to the guerrilla fights and irregular harrying of a conquered country. In the case of a war between powerful Chile and weak Peru, this would mean that, while the United States Government would not interfere with regular battles, Peru, if conquered, would not have to fear a long and destructive continuance of war, and probably Chile would not be allowed to make up the expenses of the war by means of territorial acquisition. All this theory so hopeful for Peru the "Gaceta" characterizes as entirely unfounded. The only care of