

clusions. It may be easily possible for the expert comparer to prove to a man not posted that a certain company with a large expense ratio, as compared with his own, is ruinously extravagant; whereas, as a matter of fact, the purpose for which the expense was incurred being rightly understood, the high expense company is less extravagant than the one apparently so superior.

Numerous other lines of perverted comparisons will readily occur wherein figures are made to lie most abominably. For this sort of lying there is no excuse, and the companies which make or allow their agents to make comparisons of things not legitimately comparable are guilty of downright dishonesty. Some of them are beginning to find out that honesty is the best policy in the management of a life insurance company, as well as in other lines of business; and that a too free use of honest figures, under the manipulation of a "smart" statistician, in such a way as to purposely deceive the public, leads that public when once undeceived to distrust the existence of the good and strong points really possessed by the deceiving company. The use of legitimate comparison has been extensively abused of late, and the credit of life insurance and the prosperity of individual companies alike demand an early reform.

THE UNITED FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY.

The fifteenth annual statement of the above company, being for the year 1892, has been made, and we lay it before our readers on another page in detail. We think it will be generally conceded that the report is, on the whole, a satisfactory one, for while the losses of the year were about the average of other good companies—65 per cent.—the expense ratio was less than many, and considering the wide field covered, we think very moderate, for it was only about 32 per cent. The current business of the year shows a handsome increase, the premiums being \$258,920 in excess of 1891, and the total net premium income being \$2,046,055. From interest and profits on investments was received \$44,305, making a total income of \$2,090,360. The company paid out for losses \$1,333,450, and for expenses of all kinds, including commissions, taxes, etc., \$663,655, or a total of \$1,997,105, leaving a balance to the credit of profit and loss account of \$93,260 on the year's transactions. The reserve fund, after writing off one-third on the cost of purchased business, stands at \$826,760, which, added to the \$500,000 of paid up capital, constitutes a very comfortable sum for the security of policyholders. The total assets now amount to \$1,977,585. It may not be amiss to mention that the consort of the United Fire, the Palatine, with which a joint business is transacted, makes a satisfactory showing, the loss and expense ratios being almost identical as was also the volume of business transacted. The premiums received by the Palatine were \$2,026,455 and the losses \$1,339,155. We notice that whereas the balance from revenue account at the end of 1891 was \$618,590, at the end of 1892 it was \$923,430, after paying the interim dividend, showing a growth belonging to

a vigorous life. The balance carried forward from revenue account added to the capital makes \$1,783,750, and the total assets reported are \$2,571,015. Both of the above companies, under the management of Mr. J. N. Lane, seem to be moving on safe lines and to indicate a successful future. In Canada the United Fire, since the death of his associate manager, Mr. Percy F. Lane, has been in charge of Mr. T. H. Hudson, who has bravely met the responsibility thrown upon him, and by his zealous and conscientious work won the esteem of all his underwriting associates. The future of the company in Canada may be regarded as hopeful.

THE CANADA LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY.

It has become a chronic habit of the Canada Life to make a very satisfactory annual statement of its business and condition, and the report for 1892, printed on another page, shows that the habit is as strong as ever. For forty-six years this Canadian institution has been steadily growing in size and strength, until it counts its resources at over thirteen millions of dollars, and holds insurance in force upon 20,495 lives under 27,772 policies amounting to nearly sixty millions. During 1892 the company accepted applications for \$6,792,670, of which \$6,201,011, under 2,582 policies, went into force as completed insurance. This shows an increase over the previous year of nearly a million dollars, with a corresponding increase in receipts. The total income was \$2,344,077, of which \$1,719,352 was from premiums and \$623,110 from interest, the remainder from miscellaneous sources. There was paid out \$1,404,534, of which \$304,448 was for expenses, and \$301,610 for bonuses or dividends, while death claims absorbed \$633,585 and matured endowments \$58,300. The excess of total income over total disbursements was \$939,543, carried to the increase of assets, which with other investment gains makes the increase for the year \$1,003,005. It will be noticed that the income from interest lacked only about \$10,000 of paying the death claims adjusted. The incurred claims were considerably more than those paid, but though larger than in the previous history of the company were well within the table rate, it is stated. In the matter of management expenses the company makes a very satisfactory showing indeed, only 12.9 per cent. of the total income having been used for expenses—a trifle less than for the preceding year. We regret that the form in which the financial statement is made up does not enable us to state the actual surplus belonging to the company; but judging from the Government report of 1891, the policyholders' surplus must be not far from \$1,850,000, and is, at all events, large enough to give a very comfortable feeling of security. In the extension of its business to Michigan the company has met with increasing favor, shown by an increase of new business written over 1891 of nearly \$300,000, and placing it the ninth in rank in this regard among thirty-seven companies, instead of fourteenth the year before. As we have heretofore stated, arrangements have also been perfected for the transaction of business in Minnesota, which may be regarded as a