NOVA SCOTIA WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION.

The new workmen's compensation measure of the Nova Scotia Government, which we have previously intimated is on the lines of the Ontario Act, has been lately under consideration by a committee who have made several important changes in the proposed measure. Of these the most interesting is a clause designed to enable employers to contract out of the State administered scheme provided by the Act. It reads as follows:—

If the board, after taking steps to ascertain the views of the employer and workmen, certifies that any scheme of compensation benefit or *insurance*, for the workmen of any employer in any employment, whether or not such scheme includes other employers and their workmen, is on the whole not less favorable to the general body of workmen and their dependents than the provisions of this Part, the employer may, until the certificate is revoked, contract with any of those workmen that the provisions of the scheme shall be substituted for the provisions of this Part, and thereupon the employer shall be liable only in accordance with the scheme, but save as aforesaid, this part shall apply notwithstanding any contract to the contrary made after the commencement of this Act.

Presumably this amendment is designed to provide for the Steel companies in the province which have at present schemes of compensation in force. Whether it will permit others generally to get away from the State administration of the scheme remains to be seen. The private schemes have to be approved by the Board and it may be anticipated that the Board will not be over-anxious to allow employers to get away from the State Fund, particularly those who have a good accident record and who would therefore benefit most by being allowed freedom of action in the placing of their workmen's compensation insurance.

FRATERNAL SOCIETY LEGISLATION IN ONTARIO.

New legislation affecting fraternal societies is being introduced into the Ontario legislature by Hon. I. B. Lucas. A triennial report of the actual liabilities of the societies is required, the valuation being certified to by a competent accountant or actuary and to be filed within ninety days of the last preceding annual statement. The legal minimum standard of valuation for all certificates required, except for disability benefits, is the table of mortality from which the table of rates set forth in Schedule A of the Ontario Insurance Act was deduced; or, at the option of the society, any higher table; or, at its option it may use a table based on the society's own experience of at least twenty years and covering not less than fifty thousand lives with interest assumption not more than 4 p.c. per annum.

AN ASTONISHING PROVISION.

Attached to this is, however, the astonishing provision that the valuation provided for is not to be considered as a test of the financial solvency of the society, but each society is to be held legally solvent "so long as the funds in its possession are equal to or in excess of its *matured* liabilities." This gives a society insolvent on any actuarial tests an opportunity of hanging on when in the interests of the community it ought to be no longer permitted to continue business until placed on a reasonably sound footing.

FUTURE ACTION.

Further sections regarding the future of societies which show a deficiency on the valuation as of December 31, 1917, are decidedly weak. Considerably more drastic measures than those outlined below are required if these societies are to be put upon a satisfactory basis.

It is provided that if the valuation of the certificates as given on December 31, 1917, shall show that the present value of future net contributions, together with the admitted assets, is less than the present value of the promised benefits and accrued liabilities, such society shall thereafter maintain said financial condition at each succeeding triennial valuation in respect of the degree of deficiency as shown in the valuation as at December 31, 1917. If such society appears, by any triennial valuation subsequent to December 31, 1917, not to have maintained the condition therein required, it shall, within two years thereafter, make such improvement as to show a deficiency not greater than as at December 31, 1917, or thereafter as to all new members admitted be subject so far as stated rates of contribution are concerned to Schedule "A" of the Ontario Insurance Act, and that the net mortuary or beneficiary contributions and funds of such new members shall be kept separate and apart from the funds of the society. If such improvement is not shown by the succeeding triennial valuation, then the new members must be placed in a separate class and their certificates valued as an independent society in respect to the contributions and funds.