

COMMUNICATIONS.

All communications to be addressed to the Editor, INSURANCE SOCIETY, and correspondence to bear the name and address of the author, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.

The publication of a communication does not by any means commit the paper to the sentiments expressed there in; but a fair hearing will be allowed for all sides of the question we may consider of sufficient interest to the Insurance public

TORONTO LETTER.

That Lady Broker—Dull times in Insurance Circles—Montreal and Quebec Province Tariffs—Annual Meeting of "Confederation Life."

DEAR EDITOR,—Two short lines in your last number might supply the text for many articles—you say: "A lady broker is the latest addition that we have heard of to the army of Insurance Brokers in 'Montreal.'"—Gallant old Montreal! Fitly was it left to the Island City to inaugurate this new departure. We old fellows, who perhaps ought to know better than ask, cannot help asking—who is she? what is she? Is she maiden, wife, or widow? And would you mind mentioning the Insurance Company she is attached to, or favors? You call her an "addition." I suppose you mean she is a "leanto" or "attachment." Yet if she is at present detached, let us hope for the brokers' sake she will not long remain isolated. We have not gone quite so far in Toronto yet as to send out lady canvassers for insurance risks, but I suppose it will come in time. We have lady insurance clerks, in many of the offices, and they give "every satisfaction" to all concerned I am told. One thing is certain that they are always steady and reliable workers. Of course it is looked upon as an innovation, but I do not see why, under due consideration of the proprieties, the system might not be greatly extended.

Our insurance friends are complaining of the dullness in Toronto. The cold cloudy weather has continued so long that business generally has been affected. We long to hear the song of the frogs—one sure sign of the arrival of spring weather.

Glad to see that the benefits of a Tariff are being provided for your city and Province. The Ontario Tariff works along very nicely, and so far no difficulty has arisen that the rules and regulations of the Association, lubricated by good-will and "brotherly love," has failed to arrange satisfactorily to all concerned. If the first year, and the friction incident to the introduction of a system of the kind, can be safely passed, there need be no fear of disruption from any internal cause.

The twelfth annual meeting of the "Confederation Life Association" has just been held, and as I suppose you will have all details to publish I need only say that the report submitted to the shareholders was a highly satisfactory one, and reflects great credit on the management. As I well remember the infancy of the "Confederation," and contrast its small beginning with its substantial position to-day, I am reminded of the saying: "Great oaks from little acorns grow."

You must please be content with a short letter for this month, and hoping to do better by you next time.

I am yours,

ARIEL.

Toronto, 18th April, 1884.

UNPROFITABLE UNDERWRITING.

To the Editor of INSURANCE SOCIETY.

DEAR SIR:—

Under the heading of "Fire Underwriting to-day" the *Monetary Times* recently published an article, pointing out some of the causes which doubtless tend in a great measure to increase the number of fires on this continent, and has rendered fire underwriting unprofitable for some years past.

It is stated that application has been made to the Ontario Government for an additional clause to the statutory conditions now in force, to limit over-insurance, and to make it compulsory for the assured to carry a portion of his own risk. Such legislation, if generally enforced, could not fail to have a salutary effect, and would diminish the many "unaccountable" fires that saddle insurance companies with such heavy losses. Incendiary fires in nine cases out of ten result from careless underwriting, undue eagerness for business, and lack of investigation of the moral hazard. Until these evils are firmly guarded against, by united action on the part of insurance companies and their agents, fire underwriting will continue to be unremunerative.

The formation of Underwriters' Associations and Local Boards, now becoming general throughout the Dominion, will ensure more united action, and I trust will be the means of providing effectual remedies. The selection of careful and experienced agents should be one of the first considerations on the part of the companies. Too often agents are educated at a heavy cost to the companies.

Rates have been too low in many localities and should be increased, commensurate with the risk. While this necessity is fully realized by most Companies, and efforts are being made by local boards to establish "Equitable Tariffs," you will be surprised to learn that the Royal Canadian Insurance Company refuses to co-operate with the Prince Edward Island Board of Fire Underwriters recently established in Charlottetown, and persists in cutting rates there. This, too, in the face of the recent conflagration, which demonstrated beyond doubt that the town is insufficiently supplied with water, and is liable at any time to have a similar disaster. The Local Board, alive to the fact, has passed a resolution that, unless steps are taken at once to provide an adequate supply of water for fire purposes, they will increase the present tariff rates 20 per cent. within the city. With such warnings and persistent defiance of all established principles of fire underwriting it cannot be wondered that some companies fail to make money for their shareholders.

Yours truly,

"UNDERWRITER."

SOCIETY NOTES AND ITEMS.

The Montreal Fire Brigade—The estimated cost of the fire brigade for the year 1884 is \$56,716.66.

Dr. L. A. Dastous is General Agent at Sherbrooke, P.Q., for the New York Life Insurance Company.

Mr. T. H. McGuire, Q.C., has been appointed Agent for the National Assurance Company of Ireland at Kingston, Ont.

Messrs. Filliter & Holden have been appointed Agents for the National Assurance Company of Ireland for Belleville and district.

Mr. Ira Cornwall, jun., of Liverpool, Eng., has been appointed Agent General for the Province of New Brunswick, in Great Britain.

Our Contemporary Insurance has coined a very apt and expressive word for co-operative life insurance, namely, *insurancine*.

Mr. W. M. Ramsay, Manager of the Standard Life Assurance Co. has sailed for Great Britain by the "Parisian."

The Imperial Fire Insurance Company propose to erect an office building in Chicago, near the site selected by the Royal for its building.

Mr. Harold Engelbach, Manager of the National Assurance Company of Ireland, is expected to arrive in Montreal early in May from Dublin, Ireland.