

an increased rate always stirs up resentment and opposition among those called upon to pay it. Usually, too, it calls new companies into the field as competitors for business. The officers of these new companies, not being under the same necessity of making good exceptionally large losses by an increase in rates, naturally make the most of that fact in their struggle to get business ignoring that what has happened may happen again. In New York two very strong new fire companies were formed as soon as it became known that rates would be advanced as a result of the calamitous San Francisco losses; and in Canada we have seen the vigorous efforts of the Manufacturers' Association to institute a fire insurance organization within their body.

This is the question we repeat which underwriters have to grapple with and one that their opponents can only learn by experience, sometimes slow and sometimes quick, but always sure.

A noticeable feature about the above table is the greater frequency, in later years, of the large conflagrations. From 1875 to 1892, eighteen years, there was only one year, that of the St. John fire, in which the losses exceeded the receipts. From 1892 to 1905, thirteen years, there were two large deficits and two small ones.

So long as conflagrations continue causing the immense fire waste to the country so long will rates rule higher than in those places where such conflagrations are extremely rare, and we have only to point out that whereas the annual loss per head of the population in Europe including Russia is 65 cents and without Russia 35 cents, in Canada it is about \$2 per head to prove that the higher rates charged here are justified.

OTTAWA CLEARING HOUSE.—Total for week ending 20th December, 1906, \$3,374,829.75; corresponding week last year, \$2,809,661.75.

STOCK EXCHANGE NOTES.

Wednesday, P. M., Dec. 26, 1906.

The holiday Stock Market annually experienced at this season, was this year more apparent than usual, and the volume of trading throughout the entire list was insignificant. In several stocks there were no transactions, and the only securities in which the week's sales involved more than a thousand shares were Detroit Railway, Dominion Iron Common and Nova Scotia Steel Common. While there was no pressure of liquidation, prices gradually weakened, and the quotations at the close to-night show declines from the figures prevailing a week ago. The heaviness prevailing in the New York market and the liquidation brought about in that centre by unsettled money conditions, reacted on our local market, and is reflected in the lower quotations brought about by the limited selling which took place. In view of the decline in prices, the moderate liquidation is encouraging, and seems to indicate that our local securities are strongly held. While the present is not an opportune moment to talk of a bull

movement or to attempt to advance prices, still it seems a favorable opportunity to purchase the standard dividend paying stocks at figures which show such satisfactory returns on the investment. A turn upward is bound to come, and while prices in the meantime may possibly decline somewhat further, there is no question as to the present cheapness of the good securities. In the present unsettled money market, however, we would advise conservatism in commitments for those not buying outright. In other words, strong margins will be safest.

C. P. R. again shows a decrease in earnings, those for the third week of December being \$25,000 less than the corresponding week a year ago. The decrease is a trifle when it is considered that the earnings this year for the third week of December were practically \$1,250,000. The sales this week brought out 825 shares, and the stock closed with 190 bid, a decline of 2½ points from the figures prevailing a week ago.

The traction stocks, apart from Detroit Railway, show a very limited volume of business. Detroit Railway, however, was the most active security in this week's dull market, and 1,594 shares changed hands. The stock sold down to 79½, and closed with 79 bid, a decline of 15-8 points for the week. Montreal Street Railway had a further sharp decline, and sold down to 212 1-2, closing with 214 3-4 bid, a net decline of 3 1-4 points for the week on sales involving 872 shares. The Rights are now selling at 11. Toronto Railway closed with 111 1-2 bid, a further decline of 1-2 point on quotation for the week, and 181 shares changed hands. Twin City sold down to 104 1-2 and closed offered at 103 with 100 bid. The total transactions of the week, however, only involved 60 shares. There were no transactions in Halifax Tram nor in Northern Ohio Traction. The sales in Toledo brought out 199 shares, and the stock closed offered at 39 with 27 1-2 bid. Illinois Traction Preferred was dealt in to the extent of 60 shares, and closed with 89 bid, a decline of 1 point from the quotation prevailing a week ago. There were no transactions in Havana Preferred, but 40 shares of the Common changed hands at 42 1-2, and the stock closed with 42 bid, while the closing bid for the Preferred was 81.

R. & O. only figured in the week's business to the extent of 75 shares, and the closing bid was 82 1-2, a decline of 1 point for the week. Mackay Common closed with 70 bid, an advance of 1 point for the week on sales of 340 shares. The Preferred declined further and after selling at 68, closed with 67 3-4 bid, a decline of 1 3-4 points from last week's figures on sales of 99 shares.

Montreal Power in sympathy with the rest of the market was heavy, and on a moderate volume of business totalling 618 shares for the week, declined to 90, and closed with 90 bid, a net loss of 3 7-8 points for the week. Dominion Iron Common was the second stock in point of activity in this week's market, and 1,298 shares changed hands. The closing bid of 22 1-2 shows a fractional decline for the week of 1-8 point. The Preferred stock was only dealt in in broken lots for a total of 29 shares, and the closing quotation was 65 asked and 63 1-4 bid, a decline on the bid price of a point from last week's figures. The sales in the Bonds only totalled \$3,000, and the closing bid was 1-4 lower at 81. Dominion Coal Common continues weak and shows a further loss of 1 point for the week, closing with 62 bid, and 335 shares were dealt in. There were no transactions in the Preferred stock nor in the Bonds. Nova Scotia Steel Common was the strong spot in this week's uninteresting market, and on sales of 1,070 shares advanced to 72, closing with 71 3-4 bid, a net gain of 2 1-4 points for the week. There were no sales in the Preferred stock nor in the Bonds. Lake of the Woods Common was not