the agency of bank loans to the exporters and buyers; and the process thus brings about an increase of loans and an increase of deposits with no increase in actual resources. But it is not long before the loan to the exporter is cleared off through his handing the bank a bill of exchange on Liverpool covering sale of exported cheese; and with this acquisition the positive gain in cash resources commences. In June, too, the Niagara and other great fruit districts begin to contribute their quota to the deposits of the banks. Strawberries first, then the other varieties are shipped to market. It is to be remembered, however, that much of this product is consumed in the country, and the deposits which the fruit growers make in the Niagara Peninsula bank branches, therefore, represent, to quite a considerable extent, funds drawn from the cities and larger towns. But there is also a considerable export of fruit to Europe, and a respectable addition to the resources of the country from the fruit output is made each year.

So it will not be till fall that the banks will be called on to make general and large advances for carrying on the country's business.

GUARDIAN ASSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED.

During a year when general trade conditions tended to reduce fire company receipts, the Guardian Assurance Company continued to show growth of premium income. After deduction of re-assurances, fire premiums for 1908 amounted to $2,716,320, showing an increase of well on to $25,000 in comparison with 1907. Losses, after making the same deduction, amounted to $1,535,750 or 56.53 per cent. of the premiums. Expense of management (including commission to agents and charges of every kind) came to $989,730 or 36.43 p. c. of the premiums. After providing for losses and expenses—and for the addition to unearned premium reserve required by increase in premiums—there was an underwriting profit of over $184,000. Adding to this some $152,000 of interest upon reserve funds, there resulted a total profit of $336,000. Out of this sum the directors, with characteristic regard for a continued strengthening of the company's position, added $50,000 to the general fire reserve fund, leaving a balance of some $286,000 to be transferred to profit and loss. The premium reserve fund now amounts to over $1,200,000, and the general fire reserve to $2,600,000—making a total fire fund of more than $3,800,000. With an investment reserve fund of $200,000 and a profit and loss balance of well over $750,000, the company affords to its policyholders notable security, whatever contingencies may arise.

Including the life and accident branches of the company's business, the funds of the company stood as follows at the close of 1908, after providing for payment of proposed dividends:—

Capital paid up	**$5,000,000**
General Fire Fund and Unearned Premium Reserve	**3,804,750**
Life, Annuity and Endowment Funds	**20,617,000**
Redemption Assurance Funds	**10,870**
General Accident Fund	**543,365**
Officials' Fidelity Guarantee Fund	**7,010**
Investment Reserve Fund	**200,000**
Profit and Loss Balance	**762,650**
	$30,945,645

With total assets of $32,690,000, the stability of the Guardian is evidently well assured. In Canada the activities of the Guardian continue to show healthy expansion under the careful management of Mr. H. M. Lambert, of Montreal. Agency connections throughout the Dominion are well organized, and the company enjoys deserved favour with both representatives and policyholders. Prompt settlement of claims and liberal treatment of policyholders are characteristic of the Guardian; combined with conservative underwriting methods, they account for the strong position attained in Canada as in other fields of operation.

A BUSINESS MAN'S PROBLEM.

In too many communities business men are obsessed with the idea that their interests and those of insurance companies are necessarily antagonistic. Underwriters have not been without blame for this state of affairs, in so far as it has persisted largely through ignorance which insurance interests have not always taken pains to remove. Within the past few years, however, underwriters have been taking greater pains to make the public see that fire insurance is not an "occult science," but that, with all its intricacies, it has plainly defined underlying principles. And chief of these are the facts that property destroyed by fire is absolutely annihilated, since insurance does not replace it but merely distributes the loss; that the less the loss, the less the cost of insurance; that insurance is a tax and, like other taxes, should be fairly and equitably distributed; and that the interests of property owners and insurer are mutual, so that what injures one injures the other.

In a recent address at Chicago, the chairman of the Committee on Publicity and Education of the Western Union mentioned the foregoing points as among those which the public should come to realize. It will be remembered that the committee, of which Mr. Johnson is the head, is seeking to combat the public ignorance and prejudice against fire insurance by furnishing speakers for public gatherings and commercial bodies, articles for the press and seeking closer relations between the companies and the state officials.

An important ally in this educational movement in the United States is the National Credit Men's Association—its assistance is the stronger in that the association manifestly deals with the matter in the interests of business men rather than of insurance companies.

In a series of leaflets recently sent out by the association it is pointed out that in matters of extending business credit, wholesalers, manufacturers and banks are becoming more and more particular as to customers placing adequate insurance in thoroughly sound companies. To the objection that such insurance "costs too much," the association tells business men that the remedy is largely in their own hands—in part as individuals and in part collectively. Of the three elements which determine the rate—profit, expense, loss—the latter is by far the most largely responsible. Just here is where many business men are "barking up the wrong tree," according to the credit man. Whereat he treats them to some plain speaking as follows:

"Here's what I mean by 'barking up the wrong tree.' Instead of railing at the insurance com-