source of gratification to those far-seeing individuals who have made, or intend to make, provision for their dependents by means of this scheme. Nor are these increased privileges granted to policyholders the result of legislation, but rather are they the outcome of a healthy competitive growth. Any development fostered under such circumstances is bound to culminate in a better commodity, which does not necessarily follow if attempts are made to force the companies by peremptory parliamentary reform.

As the majority of the beneficial privileges and options of the present contracts offered by Canadian life companies are the result of a healthy competition, so also are the diversified forms of insurance which may be purchased. These various plans are calculated to meet the heterogeneous circumstances of all, and also can be regulated in many cases to suit the vicissitudes of fortune of the individual. No one, therefore, need feel that life insurance cannot fill the requirements of his particular case, as the elasticity of the principle involved obviates the necessity of anyone harboring such an erroneous conception.

COMPANIES EMPLOY ABOUT TEN THOUSAND.

Not least of the considerations which render this business such a factor in the eternal round of human activity, is the fact that it furnishes employment to such an immense army of men. In Canada there are forty-six active, operating companies, with their office staffs and their field staffs, and although it cannot be accurately ascertained at the moment to what number the aggregate of employees of these companies amounts, a conservative estimate would place it at something approaching ten thousand, many of whom have families dependent on them. The arms of this business stretch from coast to coast, giving employment to a large number, and is prepared to provide ample protection for every insurable person.

In view of the employment furnished, the aid rendered to business concerns desiring expansion and the strengthening of their credit, the protection afforded, and the large sums paid annually under contracts, it may be confidently asserted that the importance of this business to the entire social and financial fabric of the country cannot be overestimated. In view, also, of the rapid progress made during the last quarter of a century, and of the latitude for expansion, it is not only a possibility, but may be considered as highly probable, that the average of protection enjoyed by the entire adult male population of the country will be augmented in the near future in no unsatisfactory manner. When this average attains to such a figure that each will leave, at death, a fair competency to his dependents, then may this same business of life insurance lay claim to have fulfilled its mission to society perfectly. And there is no reason why this goal may not be reached.

A branch of the Bank of Nova Scotia has been opened at Chester, N.S., under Mr. P. C. Pope's management.

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A new departure has been started by the National Surety in the shape of "joy rider" bonds. This policy insures the owners of cars against any losses due to the joy riding of their chauffeurs and for the bond covering a chauffeur for this insurance, the cost is $25 per $1,000.

FIRE INSURANCE AND INCENDIARISM.

(Frank Lock, U. S. Manager, Atlas of London, to International Association of Fire Engineers.)

(Continued from p. 1313.)

Overinsurance is usually in evidence from one of three causes:

1. Honest overvaluation of property from failure to understand the effect of age, depreciation, or wear and tear.
2. Fluctuation in quantities of merchandise, passing in and out of stores, or warehouses, or from changes in market values.
3. Intentional overvaluation for fraudulent ends.

Upon this subject we have access to some figures which are illuminating. In 1912 statistics of 55,391 losses incurred by 44 insurance companies in the western field were analyzed, showing only 783 cases of overinsurance, or about 1½ per cent. of the whole. Of these cases 265 were shown to be from causes perfectly honest, leaving 528 of doubtful origin. The fact would seem to be that, as suspicious losses generally come to the attention of public officials, an impression is made as though a general epidemic of overinsurance existed, when in sober reality in over 95 per cent. of all cases of loss the amount of insurance is well within the value of the property.

In New York City where the fluctuations in merchandise on storage or in transit are more frequent than elsewhere, the percentage of these cases is much heavier. In the case of 2,610 losses handled by the New York Board of Fire Underwriters in 1912, there appeared 416 cases of overinsurance or nearly 16 per cent., but 83 of these cases were of building insurance with no question of dishonest motive involved, while of the great bulk of the 333 on other property there was absolutely no taint of evil intent. The percentage of overinsurance to the total of policies in force is undoubtedly small, notwithstanding impressions to the contrary. It can not be controverted that no responsible insurance company will knowingly consent to insure property for more than its value except where fluctuations may occur on merchandise in and out of warehouse.

The topic assigned is doubtless intended to draw out light as to the causes of the heavy fire waste of the country and perhaps to suggest remedies to some extent. What has been said is an endeavor to clear the atmosphere as to what is not the cause of the fire waste, some popular opinion to the contrary notwithstanding; it is now for us to gain some idea of what are the chief producing causes and to examine.

THE QUESTION OF REMEDIES.

Consideration has been given to the normal causes of fire loss under the head "Physical Hazard," which are found in every country, also to incendiary fires analyzed according to their motives. Something was said as to "Temperamental Hazard," which was defined to mean that carelessness of mind as to causes which produce fires, as to the effects which follow, and as to remedies. Under this title are to be found the greatest volume of loss and the material upon which effort should be concentrated to minimize the fire waste. In this class are found all the preventable fires not intentionally produced, as well as the augmentation of the volume of loss after fires have occurred through fraudulent claims and the like.