his claim on the well known fact that the earth is filled with electricity, and that by the use of a powerful force to start the vibrations, currents can be directed successfully. He regards Niagara as capable of furnishing the required force, and says that by getting a machine to catch and respond to the earth's motion a spark half a mile long can be produced. "There would have to be," he says, "a synchronism between the electrical swinging of the earth and the machine," which once powerfully established at any point on the earth would permit the sending of a message to any other part. Of course this may be all purely visionary, but the extravagance of the visionaries often leads to less extravagant practical results. One thing Telsa seems to do with safety is somewhat startling: He allows 200,000 volts to pass freely through his body, or two hundred times the capacity of the most powerful dynamos!

The Limitation Advocates are Quiet.

SINCE the summary and emphatic defeat in the Connecticut legislature of the bill designed to limit the growth of life insurance companies, the advocates of that kind of legislation have been very quiet; and we may, we think, safely renew our prediction, made some weeks ago, that no law will be passed just yet by any State assuming that species of unwarrantable interference with the vested rights of companies. We quite endorse the following, from the *Insurance Herald*, when it says:—"Of late the tide has turned the other way, and limitation by law has not so many advocates. The belief is gaining ground that company growth will limit itself, that expansion beyond a certain point will be practically impossible, and that it is unwise to lean upon legislative aid in insurance matters whenever it can be avoided." Legislators do not need encouragement from the professed friends of insurance, either fire or life, just now to multiply restrictive and harassing laws, by asking at their hands legislation which strikes at the very root of corporate privilege, and substitutes usurpation by the State for the right of a company to manage its own internal affairs by its duly authorized officers, acting within their authority under the articles of incorporation.

Classification in Fire Insurance.

WE suppose that all competent fire underwriters and all well posted insurance journalists admit that a universal mercantile schedule for rating the hazard on property would be very desirable generally. The difficulty, however, in constructing an approximately correct schedule is found to consist largely in the absence of sufficient available data from which to formulate a proper rate. No one company possesses the required data, but all the companies combined do. And yet, the combined experience of the companies for twenty-five years, or for ten years, or for one year, is as thoroughly unknown as is the pathway to the North Pole. This journal is on record as an advocate of a comprehensive classification in fire insurance, based upon the experiences of the various companies for a reasonably long period as affording a basis for approximately correct rating. We notice that so good an authority as Insurance Commissioner Merrill of Massachusetts agrees with us, for he says in his last report "It must be that during the large experience of the older companies there has been acquired a fund of information from which could be compiled an experience table similar in character to that employed by the life companies in measuring their premium charges." That is a plain, common sense statement of fact; but such are the prejudices and jealousies of the companies that heretofore no such general classification has been attempted. Whenever the time comes, if ever, that such a classification shall be made, Mr. Moore's "universal mercantile schedule" may be of practical value, until then it will be only a new method of the old system of guessing.

The "Select Knights" of Canada.

A YEAR or two ago we paid our respects to an assessment concern of the "fraternal" order, called the Select Knights of Canada, with headquarters at St. Catharines, and showed up the fallacy of its promised benefits. Somebody has sent us lately some circulars issued by the concern, asking our attention thereto. It is only needful to say that the "Select Knights" is a combination affair having a beneficiary department and an alleged endowment department. In the former assessments are fixed at fifty cents for each $1,000 up to $3,000 of insurance, and can be made as frequently as the managers choose. In case of death, the full amount of the certificate is supposed to be payable, and in case of total disablement one-half the amount. The endowment scheme calls for monthly payments of $2 each for ten years, when it is "expected" that $1,000 will be forked over to the credulous investor; or if he dies during the ten years, $100 for each calendar year of membership. This plan also has the disability attachment. Of course, as we have time and again demonstrated, everybody with an ordinary amount of common sense and who knows the primary rules of arithmetic also knows that no institution can legitimately expand the $240 paid in during the ten years into $1,000, meantime paying disability claims, to say nothing of expenses. In Massachusetts, some three years ago, the legislature granted permission to these endowment orders to try making one dollar grow to be four in a given period, and 56 have tried it. Of that number ten only are alive, though in a dying condition, all the rest having been closed up by the courts or died outright. The members of the Select Knights of Canada had better profit speedily by the striking example over the border.

The anniversary number of the *Spectator* of New York, recently issued in commemoration of its twenty-five completed years of existence, is certainly a very creditable performance, whether regarded with reference to typographical appearance, varied and valuable contents, or artistic and profitable advertising. The whole ground of insurance is well covered by able contributed articles from practical underwriters, among whom we notice Messrs. E. P. Heaton, Gerald E. Hart and C. R. G. Johnson of Montreal. The *Spectator* is to be congratulated on its enterprise.