

SUPPLY AND DEMAND.

Under this heading I wish to refer to a condition I have not yet touched upon, which is the danger of overcrowding the field with Companies. While the general conditions at the present time are undoubtedly favourable to Life Insurance business, notwithstanding such drawbacks as taxation, ill-advised methods in competition and unnecessary cost of the new business, the danger of overcrowding the field with Companies is serious. Like other kinds of business, supply and demand is a factor in the making of profit. Even now it is a debatable question if there are not too many Companies in the field. There has been a strong tendency in the last year or two in certain quarters, in favour of launching more new Companies. It must be plain that with nineteen Canadian Companies, four British, and nine United States Companies now actively competing, there cannot be room for any more to do a profitable business. For the successful organization and launching of additional new Companies there is a scarcity of executive material and directors to choose from that are not already connected with active Companies. It would be wise if a reasonable lapse of time were insisted upon before any more charters are granted.

In conclusion, I would express my opinion that Canada is a good field for Life Insurance, believing that as we advance the difficulties which now exist will not be aggravated or increased, and that new conditions, as they develop, will be so harmonized with the great interests of the business as to be a benefit to both Companies and policyholders. Canada is a desirable field for Life Insurance, not only because conditions for a safe and profitable business are favourable, but because the country has a great future before it—in wealth, population and desirable conditions of living. Its climate is adapted to the development of a hardy race, endowed, mentally and physically, with intelligence, persistence and abundant force. Under such conditions, there is no reason why the Companies that are now in Canada should not continue to obtain a satisfactory and profitable business.

I wish to acknowledge the kindness of Mr. William Fitzgerald, Superintendent of Insurance, and Mr. Geo. Johnson, F.S.S., Statistician, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, for data placed at my disposal.

THE INSURERS PROTECTIVE COMPANY, of Springfield, Mass., has been organized to give subscribers information respecting companies, as to their business methods, policy terms, etc.; it will also advise as to expirations, and provide an export adjuster in case of loss.

TRUE BUT NOT VERY COMPLIMENTARY.—"The American people pay great aggregate sums for fire insurance, because they are a careless people, and burn vast aggregates of property values every year. There is hardly another nation on the earth that does not set a good example to the United States in the matter of losses by fire. The trouble the people are having on the fire insurance question is not based so much on what the insurance companies are charging, for the time being, as it is on what they, the people, permit to take place annually in the way of fires and the obliteration of property thereby."—"Insurance Press."

THE SUICIDE CLAUSE.—Attempts to place a meaning on the "suicide clause" in life assurance contracts have led to any number of legal disputes, and not a few judicial decisions which may have appeared conflicting to the average lay mind. One much debated question has been whether the policy should be voided or not in the event of the act of suicide being carried out during a condition of insanity,

either more or less permanent or temporary. In this connection a recent decision of the Supreme Court of the United States is interesting. It was held that what is known as the "suicide statute" of Missouri applies to policies issued in that State by outside companies, and that, despite the fact that the policy contains a provision for avoidance in case of suicide "whether while sane or insane," a policy must be paid if the insured commits suicide while in the latter condition.

STOCK EXCHANGE NOTES.

Wednesday, p.m., February 4, 1903.

The advance in Marconi, which was listed last week, and the renewed interest in Payne Mining stock, developed through the encouraging news received from the mine, have been the only noticeable features of this week's market. Apart from this the trading has been dull and the price movements within narrow bounds. C. P. R. continues to hold very firm, but no noticeable improvement in price has taken place. The earnings for the last ten days of January show another remarkable increase. R. & O. has developed a slight movement the last two days, and the stock has moved up a couple of points, and closed fairly strong. There seems little of the stock coming out and on its present basis it appears attractive to some people. The traction stocks were inactive this week, and Twin City has declined in price. Montreal Power weakened somewhat yesterday, but has recovered and closed fairly firm. The only new development in connection with this stock so far as is known is the suit taken by the Lachine Company against them over the disputed account for the power furnished during the disablement of their dam at Chambly. This suit is not likely to have any effect on the stock one way or the other as the difference in price between what the Power Company are willing to pay, and what the Lachine consider they are entitled to, is not in itself a large amount. Amalgamation rumours involving these two Companies have been rife during the last week or ten days, and very circumstantial reports have been given out, but one and all have been officially denied. The dealing in the Steel Stocks this week has been small, and only 75 shares of Dominion Coal Common changed hands. The news received from the Payne Mine is to the effect that the vein has been struck on the No. 8 level and promises well. They have now ore on three levels and it is stated that it is remarkably good, and the smelter returns, despite the lower price of lead, compare very favourably with the highest returns achieved by the Company. This result is to a certain extent accounted for by the Company concentrating their ores before sending to the smelter and removing the zinc, and we understand they are finding a ready zinc market.

The rate for call money in New York to-day was $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., and in London the rate was 3 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The local rate remains unchanged at 6 per cent. It is, however, confidently expected, that our local banks will reduce the high rate of 6 per cent. in the near future. The quotations for money at continental points are as follows:—

	Market.	Bank.
Paris.....	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	3
Berlin.....	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	4
Hamburg.....	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	4
Frankfort.....	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	4
Amsterdam.....	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	3
Vienna.....	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Brussels.....	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	3

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The sales in C. P. R. this week involved 5,565 shares and the stock closed with 137 bid, an advance of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a point on the week's business. The earnings for the last ten days of January show an increase of \$154,000.