

Societies, Sir Edward Brabrook, C.B., "in the old days the workman who had some slight injury had sufficient manliness to take little or no notice of it, but now, as there is a question of obtaining compensation, everything involving even the slightest injury is likely to be notified." Or, as another qualified observer asserts: "formerly when one of our sawyers cut a finger, he tied it up and went on working, but nowadays in the event of such an accident he knocks off work and relies on compensation."

It is slight wonder that insurance rates during 1909 are to be 10 to 25 per cent. higher than last year, according to the decision of leading casualty companies in Great Britain.



A RECOGNIZED EVIL—AND A REMEDY WANTED.

With regard to underground insurance, Canadian fire underwriters will find much to interest them in the recent annual report issued by the retiring superintendent of insurance for New York State. According to Mr. Kelsey, his department had had submitted to it—particularly during the past year—numerous letters of complaint against the placing of insurance in corporations and associations not authorized to transact the business of insurance in the state. Unlike the Dominion insurance department, that of New York State does not leave to the insurance companies the sole task of taking action against offenders. Indeed, a particular investigation has been made covering each complaint, but with only very limited success in curtailing the transaction of such prohibited business. He points out that the phraseology of the various sections of the insurance law which have particular reference to the acts of agents is of such a character that, without the co-operation of the assured, it is a matter of the greatest difficulty to secure sufficient evidence upon which a criminal action might be commenced. The particular difficulty experienced by the examiners of the department in the investigations made is the lack of necessary evidence to prove that the individual agent is acting for and on the behalf of the unauthorized corporation or association. In practically every investigation made by the department the agent has justified his acts by assuming to be the representative of the assured. In a great number of cases this assumption is, of course, a mere subterfuge for the purpose of evading the requirements of the statutes.

The superintendent urges that through such illegal operations a very large amount of premium income is diverted from regularly licensed fire insurance corporations that fully conform to the requirements of the insurance law and pay fees and taxes for the privilege of transacting business in the state. As is the case in Canada, the risks

insured are very largely not of a surplus line character, but risks which in great part might be fully protected in corporations authorized to transact business in the state. It is apparent that the activities of the individuals operating in such illegal manner interfere seriously with the business of regularly licensed corporations. Such acts, as the superintendent clearly shows, are to the detriment of the interest of the broker conducting business in accordance with law, and of the interests of the state and the general public—though inuring to the benefit of the unadmitted corporations and the individuals conducting an illegal undertaking.

In conclusion he urges that legislation be enacted looking to the proper regulation of the acts of agents and brokers in the transaction of this class of insurance. But just how to do it—effectively—"there's the rub."

In the same vein, Insurance Commissioner Rittenhouse of Colorado advocates legislation that will check the business of unauthorized companies, good and bad, and at the same time take care of surplus risks, especially in the extra hazardous line. He suggests that the insurance laws be amended so as to provide that any person accepting or making any contract of insurance with an unauthorized company shall pay to the State a fee of at least 3 per cent. of the premium paid, the contract to be of no force or effect until such fee has been paid and receipt received therefor. Provided that, where an affidavit is filed with the Insurance Department to the effect that the insurance desired, or any part of it, cannot be placed in authorized companies, such insurance may be placed in unauthorized companies without the payment of the license fee. "The enactment of such an amendment says the commissioner," would put a stop to the abuses now complained of, *providing, of course, that it was enforced.*" The italics are not the commissioner's, but they well might be.



THE AETNA LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.

The Aetna Life Insurance Company, of Hartford—now entering upon its sixtieth year of underwriting activity—has paid over \$183,000,000 to policyholders and their beneficiaries since its commencement. The history of this well-known Company has been made up of years of steady growth and progress—and 1908 proved no exception to the rule. Premium income increased \$264,370, to a total of \$15,452,928. Aggregate income from all sources was \$19,279,640, or \$516,871 more than in 1907. Assets made a notable growth of \$5,719,152 during the year, and are now stated at \$92,124,624. The surplus to policyholders is no less than \$7,769,201—this important item having increased \$2,182,192 during the twelvemonth.