AGAINST INCENDIARIES.

One of the latest objects which fire insurance companies have attempted to secure through co-operation is a reduction of losses caused by incendiaries. Each company has to guard itself against the first act of an incendiary; but through co-operation the companies can protect one another from further loss at the hand of the same incendiary. Under the present system, whenever a company finds out or suspects that a loss has been due to a desire on the part of some one to "sell out" to the insurance company at a fancy price, it is in a position to communicate with all other companies through a central bureau. As such work is good for all companies, the burden of expense should be borne by all. When the above facts—and a vast number of others, for only a very few have been mentioned—are taken into consideration, the conclusion necessarily follows that co-operation among fire insurance companies is highly desirable from every point of view.

CANADA ACCIDENT ASSURANCE COMPANY.

Announcement is made by the Canada Accident Assurance Company, that Mr. James Kerr Osborne, of Toronto, a director of the Massey-Harris Company, Limited, has been elected a director in succession to the late Hon. S. C. Wood. The board of the Canada Accident is now composed as follows:—Messrs. S. H. Ewing (president), J. S. N. Dougall (vice-president), Hon. N. Curry, James McGregor, James Kerr Osborne and T. H. Hudson (manager).

LIFE "DIVIDENDS" NOT TAXABLE.

Announcement is made that the returned portion of premiums contained in dividends to policyholders in both mutual and stock life insurance companies are exempted from the new Federal Income Tax in the United States.

About $700,000 a year will be saved to policyholders by this amendment, according to an estimate prepared for Congress leaders recently. This figure is on the basis of the life insurance business done in 1911 on which the corporation tax was paid in 1912. Furthermore, the amount of saving effected by the amendment will increase from year to year with the constant growth of life insurance business. Of course, in the nature of things, this estimate had to make certain assumptions as to figures, but it is believed to be fairly near the amount involved.

BONUS FIRE POLICIES.

According to an English exchange, some perturbation is being expressed at a new departure by the Guarantee Society, which after hiding its light under a bushel, so to speak, since 1840, during which time it has built up a magnificent guarantee business, has lately launched out into publicity and the fire business. This Society is now offering, apparently in Great Britain only, bonus fire policies. The offer is restricted to private houses—buildings and contents; public buildings of all descriptions, such as offices, town halls, churches, hospitals, and asylums; and shops of all kinds rateable up to but not above 3s. per cent. As the Society is able to offer excellent security, the opinion is expressed that this new competition is likely to be severely felt.

FIRE INSURANCE AND INCENDIARISM.

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

(Continued from p. 1345.)

The companies maintain all over the country bureaus for the joint rating and inspection of risks affecting practically all of the manufacturing plants, business houses and other important buildings, whereby defects and their remedies are brought out into the clear light, and subjected to the ordeal of the rate which makes charges for defects and gives credits for betterments; the general uplift of the conditions which make for safety through this agency can scarcely be exaggerated, although the great benefit of this work is to appear even more in the future than in the past.

With the incoming of new industries of a serious nature it has devolved upon the fire insurance business to become their custodian, to take charge of and to become acquainted with new and obscure hazards and to formulate the conditions for these new features so that they can be tolerated in safety in the community. This is especially illustrated in connection with the petroleum hazard which developed fifty years ago, the electrical hazards which came in forty years ago or less, and automobile hazards which have come among us in recent times.

THE INTERNAL PROTECTION OF PROPERTIES

has become the peculiar study and function of the fire insurance organizations and as a result the importance of automatic sprinklers, thermostats, standpipes and hose and all the infinite detail of internal protection has been dependent upon the insurance expert for development.

The ordinances regulating buildings and fire limits in the principal cities in years past can only be described as chaotic or non-existent. It has devolved upon the insurance companies, peculiarly through the National Board of Fire Underwriters, to press upon the communities everywhere the adoption of properly drawn building codes and the definition of properly laid out fire zones. This has been a work of immense importance, and the building code of the National Board of Fire Underwriters is practically standard throughout the land.

The fire insurance companies have designed and installed a laboratory which is unique and which is established for the testing of all building materials, of all defensive devices and of all fire fighting paraphernalia. This institution is of international reputation and is an adjunct to the National Board of Fire Underwriters of the utmost value to the general public.

THE WORK OF THE INDIVIDUAL COMPANIES

cannot be ignored. Each company of any importance maintains a staff of inspectors and special agents whose combined work in the course of a year represents literally millions of inspections, through which are pointed out defects and improper conditions liable to produce fires, expert knowledge being brought to this work, which feature alone far outweighs in value any harm from supposed increase of loss from incendiarism. In other words, no sane man can question but that the fire loss would have enormously increased had the work of the insurance inspectors maintained by the companies been withdrawn summarily, say ten years ago, and such increase would have come, not from dishonesty, but from the lack of the technical