

should have no other interest. His doctrine hits his brother Langmuir. But the line has got to be drawn more sharply between concerns like the Continental Life and the Ontario Securities.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Wisely managed the newly-begotten Dominion Life Underwriters' Association will do a great deal to improve the conduct of life insurance in Canada. Many who doubt that rebating can be suppressed by law, think that it can be ended by the agents and companies acting jointly. The rebating evil is a menace to the whole business in Canada. It has been well said, "rebating robs one man to bribe another." If the Association stamps out rebating it will more than justify its existence.

The idea that denatured alcohol can be produced in Western Canada for ten cents per gallon is too optimistic. The Saskatchewan and Ottawa Governments are arranging for experiments to ascertain the cost of the new factor in light, heat and power. It is estimated that this fall from 30,000,000 to 50,000,000 bushels of corn will be converted into alcohol in the Middle and Western States. Yesterday United States Commissioner of Revenue, Yerkes, sailed for Europe to investigate the conditions under which denatured alcohol is manufactured in England, France, and Germany.

Japan is formulating a protective tariff, modeled, it is believed, much after that of the United States. Raw material is to be admitted free in most cases, but careful attention is being given to the question of ascertaining what products can be produced in Korea and Manchuria. So far as known at present the duties on manufactured goods are raised in nearly every case, sometimes to an almost prohibitive extent. That on flour affects Canadians hopes of a large trade in that commodity. It is supposed that Japan's object is not merely to protect and develop her industries but to raise a larger revenue to meet the burden caused by the war. Perhaps the "regeneration" of Japan is not going to be so very beneficial after all.

The Canadian farmer who is driven to rely upon green immigrant labor, may find comfort in the reflection that in other parts of the continent there is a woful scarcity and inefficiency of hired help. In prospect of an early harvest, Kansas corn-growers are raiding gangs of section men, and haunting railroad stations to pounce on the fortunate individual who has no long engagements. There are reports of automobile tours for the prospective harvester; and fervent promises of the fried chicken for Sunday dinner. There is a story of similar stringency in Massachusetts, which lacks the picturesqueness of the auto. and the fried hen. The New Englander is less profuse of promises, and more fertile in complaint. He wants only the best assistance for \$20 a month and board. Where he only supplies his man with shelter, milk, and firewood, he pays \$8, and to a fine fellow who dwells quite apart, he will give \$35. For haying and harvest he is willing to concede \$1.50 a day. It is a little early to size up the harvest labor prospects of Western Canada. Twenty-five bushels to the acre

means many pecks of trouble to the prairie farmer. But he can stand lots of it. So can his banker.

■

The Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway is supposed by some to be the only profitable Government-owned railway in existence. That is scarcely true, unless the continents which are inferior to our own do not count. The Government railways of Cape Colony for many years paid their way, and did more than anything else to replenish the public treasury. But the Rand made the money. If the road had depended on the agricultural country through which it passed, the traffic would not have paid interest on capital expended. The Temiskaming and Northern Ontario cannot become the subject of such a curious deal as that which has been engineered by the South African Customs Convention. Tariffs on imports were readjusted, so as to produce additional revenue of \$3,000,000. Partially to offset this the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, which are also served by Government railways, have been conceded reductions in freight rates estimated at \$1,500,000. The arrangement has been legislatively endorsed; but there is a good deal of kicking against it. Clearly, the railroads are not run as purely business propositions. Lots of things in South Africa seem to be handled upside down.

■

The British Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Asquith, has joined the apostolate of financial publicity. He has invited British bankers to publish returns more frequently. Lord Goschen, half a generation ago said it was anomalous that joint stock and private banks only published their accounts half-yearly or yearly. These banks furnish returns more often nowadays; but Mr. Asquith wants them to be like the Bank of England, and do it every week. His proposal is partly due to his desire to abolish "window dressing," a custom to which banks of most exalted rectitude in the United Kingdom are said to resort with much grace and effect. Thoroughgoing assailants of Canadian insurance methods will be surprised that the Imperial treasurer should find it necessary to rebuke the window-dressers who insist on certain loans being paid off a day or two before the balance sheet is made up and renew them as soon as the new year begins. When Superintendent Fitzgerald at Ottawa announced that this had been done occasionally in the Dominion a murmur of horrified surprise floated across the Dominion. From that time English high-mindedness has been held up for our respectful salutations. Of course two blacks do not make one white; and when specific kinds of loans are prohibited by law, the law should not be broken by even the most harmless-looking feat in window-dressing. It should be amended. But it is consolatory to know that John Bull is not always the plaster saint in monetary ethics that he is sometimes supposed to be.

** Several pages of matter are unavoidably held over, including Nova Scotia letter, proceedings of the Insurance Commission, and "Money in Parliament." —Ed.

■ ■ ■

Mr. F. H. Russell, manager for Canada of the Railway Passengers Assurance Co., of London, returned to Toronto Monday, after an absence of six weeks in England.