PREVENTING LOSS OF FOOD BY LIGHTNING

In eastern Canada, April and May are the worst months for fires resulting from lightning. In Ontario, lightning fires during April and May, 1917, numbered 172, entailing a loss of $158,921, little over half of which was covered by insurance.

Many lightning-rod systems have been installed during the past few years, and these are gradually showing results. When properly installed they give almost absolute protection, so much so that many of the farmers' mutual insurance companies report no losses by lightning on rodded buildings, while others will not insure a risk that is not rodded.

Menace of Wire Fences.

The rapid increase in the use of wire fences constitutes a serious lightning menace to live stock. Many hundreds are killed by getting close to wire fences during a thunder storm. When lightning strikes the wire fences, if there are no ground wires, or if iron fence posts are not used, the animals furnish the path of least resistance between the fence and the ground. Wire fences, should have a ground wire sunk to moist earth, every few rods, to carry off the current.

Lightning-rod installations should be inspected before April, in case any break in the continuity of the cables has been caused by the severe winter weather; the grounding of the cable should also be assured.

With the tremendous world shortage of food, and the great demands being made upon Canada to increase the supply, it is of the utmost importance that the great destruction of foodstuffs caused by lightning striking wire fences and destroying barns and their contents should be overcome.

GOVERNMENT FIRE INSURANCE.

American fire underwriters are somewhat perturbed by the intimation that the United States Government is planning legislation to take over the inspection work and insurance on all properties, manufacturing handling or storing necessities of war. It is estimated that this measure would mean the taking over of almost 40 per cent. of the fire insurance business. It is pointed out by the New York Spectator that only one excuse for the Government entering into the field of underwriting at all is in existence. War risks of a character that were too hazardous to involve the risk of private capital have been assumed by the Government. This, remarks the Spectator, is a proper Government function and one that has had the whole-hearted support of the private companies. But the question now brought up by those advocating the passage of this measure does not involve uninsurable risks, and the policyholders are well satisfied with the service of the private companies, the facilities they offer and the excellent financial security behind them.

A speaker in the Bavarian Diet declared to the Government last month that, if no war indemnity is obtained by Germany, confiscation of German wealth up to 40 or 50 thousand million marks, or $10,000,000,000 to $12,500,000,000, will be inevitable after the war.

THE CO-INSURANCE CLAUSE.

Mr. Fred. A. Burgess, in a paper read before the Insurance Institute of Vancouver, pointed out that it has often been claimed by those ignorant of the application of co-insurance conditions that such clauses are tricks or traps to catch the unwary, and some States in the United States have legislated against the co-insurance clause. Nothing is further from the truth, however, and court decisions are sufficient evidence to refute any such statement. Mr. Burgess expressed the opinion that the name of the clause tends to misunderstanding, and suggested that it should be called the "reduced rate average clause." The co-insurance clause, he said, should be explained to the assured on every possible occasion, and for this reason, he was of the opinion that a clause by another name and more simply worded should be used. He expressed a preference for the "reduced rate average clause" as follows:—

> "In consideration of the reduced rate at which, and the form under which this policy is written, it is expressly stipulated and made a condition of the contract that, in the event of loss, this company shall be liable for no greater proportion thereof than the amount hereby insured bears to 80 per cent. of the actual value of the property described herein at the time when such loss shall happen, nor for more than the proportion which this policy bears to the total insurance thereon. This clause, however, shall not apply to any loss which does not exceed 2 per cent. of the total insurance on the property.
>
> "If this policy be divided into two or more items, the foregoing conditions shall apply to each item separately."

PERSONALS.

Mr. Arthur Barry, manager for Canada, Royal Exchange Assurance, is visiting the head office of his Company in England.

* * *

Messrs. N. L. McGloan & Company, dealers in investment securities, announce the opening of offices at 46, Princess Street, St. John, N.B.

* * *

Mr. T. D. Belfield, manager for Canada, Alliance Assurance Co., Limited, has left for Cuba, in connection with the business of his Company.

* * *

Mr. T. H. Meunier, managing-director, British Colonial Fire Insurance Company, who has been visiting France and England in connection with the business of his Company for the past two months, is expected in Montreal this week.

* * *

Mr. George H. Smith, for many years superintendant of branches and secretary of the Canada Permanent Mortgage Corporation, has been appointed assistant general manager. The promotion is very agreeable news to Mr. Smith's many friends, who know that it has been more than deserved.

The farmer-banker who makes a moderate amount of life insurance a condition of credit will be a benefactor to the farming community.—Vere. C. Brown, Canadian Bank of Commerce.