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Title Stealing. The Commercial Union, of London, England, is not to be confounded with the Commercial Union Underwriters of Chicago, is a caution given by the "Investigator." The latter affair is described as "an insurance curio." It is quite a compliment for an English company's name to be adopted by an American organization, as it is so taken to impress the public with the stability of the jackdaw that has decked itself with peacock's feathers. This assumption, here, and in the States, of titles held in honour in England, is a mean business.

Training needed for Insurance Duties.

At the recent meeting of the Underwriters' Association of the Northwest, Mr. Neal Bassett made some very sensible remarks respecting the desirability of a special course of instruction being provided for those engaged in the insurance business. What profession, save ours, he asked, admits to full membership the applicant whose main qualification is ambition—valuable though that quality is? In law, in medicine, in engineering, in architecture, and, in fact, in most professions, the applicant must pass an examination before he is admitted to practice. Even the plumber serves his practical apprenticeship, and must qualify. In fact to-day we have schools of farming and mechanical arts, as well as for training men for professional life, while all that is required to make an "insurance man" is luck, and a manager. I do not wish to decry the knowledge gained in the school of experience, and no one can deny that it is the finishing touch needed to complete the education of any man in any profession. It is possible, also, that to-day we have men who are now as competent as if they had received a full college course in the science of underwriting and fire prevention. But I do believe, and say without fear of contradiction, that these same men would have attained their present knowledge and positions with much more ease to themselves, with less loss to their companies, and much earlier in life, had they been specially educated and trained for their life work. In earlier years there were no provisions made

for the professional training of clergymen, doctors, lawyers, military officers, architects, etc. Those destined for those callings, were left to pick up instruction very promiscuously. Divinity, Medical, Legal and Military Colleges are quite modern institutions. McGill is one of the few colleges which have a Professor of Architecture. The introduction of Insurance as a part of the curriculum of a College is in accordance with the development which has been going on for years in the sphere of education.

The Review on the Fire Business of last year.

On the fire business of last year the "Review," London, England, has the following: The North British and Mercantile and the Northern seem to come out very well from last year, and on a rising income; so do also the Norwich Union and the Royal. It is curious that both the Sun Fire and the Phoenix, which have such a big stake in London insurances, should be, in their percentage of loss, slightly above the offices we have mentioned, whilst the Westminster, whose name may be considered as a synonym for a tower of strength, and to which business gravitates and is not necessarily sought for, shows that the percentage of losses and expenses of 93.8. But the expenses of the Westminster, are about 10 per cent. higher than the expenses of the offices whose names we have given, which accounts for the difference. The County, as is always the case, is moderate both in losses and expenses, although it is the loss rate which kills, and not the expense rate, a fact which too many offices fail to understand. The Liverpool & London & Globe increased its premium income by £170,000, and yet came out with 83.5 per cent.; whilst the Law Fire and the Law Union and Crown give evidence of their legal prudence and come out uncommonly well. We cannot help thinking that, taking things all round, the reports for 1903 will be very much in favour of the fire insurance business, although a falling off in the life branch may be shown in too many cases. Meanwhile, the crush of life policyholders anxious to get loans on their surrender values increases.