

THE RE-INSURANCE POSITION.

The Manchester Policyholder, whose editor, Sir Harold Elverston, M.P., is chairman of one of the English re-insurance companies, publishes some exceedingly useful and interesting notes on the fire re-insurance position, including translations from French and German insurance publications. It has been estimated, says the Policyholder, that in pre-war days the re-insurance premiums paid to companies of enemy origin amounted to no less than £20,000,000 per annum, but this can only be an estimate, and a rough one at that. At the major portion of that business was suddenly thrown upon the market, and few British re-insurance offices existed, the immediate result was that a number of companies from neutral countries made a bid for the business, many of them in a tentative sort of way, however, for they did not establish a place of business in Great Britain, but, with very few exceptions, they only opened agencies over here, thus avoiding the formality of depositing their accounts annually with the British Board of Trade.

"We always believed," says the Policyholder, "that the way for the Britisher to meet foreign competition is to do what the foreigner does, only to do it better. England, the cradle of insurance, the country which possesses the largest number of the most powerful direct insurance companies in the whole world, ought not to be without its native re-insurance offices in future. This business has still to be conquered, however, for a very small percentage of the business is absorbed by national re-insurance offices."

German Companies Getting Nervous.

It appears from articles which have lately been published in the German insurance press that the German re-insurance offices are more than a little nervous in regard to the future cause of their business. They are now pleading that insurance should be an international trade, which shall not be interrupted even by war itself. They argue that, on this side of the Atlantic, companies are required to make deposits which guarantee the fulfilment of obligations within the country, and further that companies are subject to individual supervision and therefore insurance should, in strict justice, be made an exception to conditions imposed on other trades, etc.

Whether the German companies like it or not, remarks the Policyholder, they cannot get away from the fact that Great Britain is the most important insurance centre in the world, and that their future lies very much in the hands of the British offices. The Policyholder believes it improbable that the large blocks of re-insurances which formerly went abroad will leave Great Britain in future.

THE RETAILER'S FIRE INSURANCE.

Any live retailer, whether his turnover be large or small, is interested in ways and means whereby his expenses may be reduced to a minimum. The reduction of his insurance rates is an important step in this connection, and are in what the retailer can be effectively assisted by the wide-awake local agent, with advantage to the agent. Many dealers will find it possible to reduce the rates in their own individual cases by making

arrangements whereby the hazard of their property is improved, and particularly at the time when a new building is being erected, or an old one remodelled, can make very valuable suggestions. Such suggestions will establish the agent with the retailer, as the latter's insurance adviser, while at the same time contributing to the lessening of the fire hazard in the local agent's community and thus being an advantage to the agent's company. The many and varied lines of merchandise carried by the country town and village retailer, including some of a high degree of inflammability, make the cultivation of care in construction and cultivation of careful habits on his part well worth while in the cause of fire prevention.

THE TEMPERAMENTAL HAZARD.

The subjoined quotation from a recent address by Mr. Frank Lock, U. S. manager of the Atlas, puts in the most pointed and condensed form, an argument which needs endless repetition with the public. The points of this argument should be known by heart by every agent, ready for use at every opportunity, in the interests of his business, and in these days also, in the interests of the conservation of wealth.

"The temperamental hazard," said Mr. Lock, "is the point of view which the community, you premium payers, have towards the fire insurance business. You are wrong in your point of view. By that I mean, if you get a jury to try a case of fraud, the sympathy of the jury goes to the claimant and against the company. If you get a man up on the charge of arson or incendiarism, every loophole of escape is made for the man as against the company. But who is the company in the last analysis? You are. For insurance companies do not pay their losses out of capital; they do not intend to. Capital is there as a pledge and a guarantee for the day of catastrophe which might come in the sweeping away of a city, but it is intended that our losses and expenses should be paid out of the contributions which you men make, and when you men pay your premiums, and when you in your newspapers, in your legislative halls and in your courts, give the bent of your sympathies and of your moral support towards the man who is a presumptive wrongdoer or criminal, so that he gets what he is not entitled to, you gentlemen are paying the price. There is nowhere else to put the price that is thus paid but into your premium."

Mr. J. A. Jessup, manager Casualty Department, Royal Exchange Assurance Co., has returned from a business trip to Toronto. He reports satisfactory progress being made in volume of business this year, automobile business being specially good.

The Travellers Life Assurance Company

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