

NEW YORK INSURANCE LETTER.**GOSSIP ABOUT AFFAIRS AND CONDITIONS IN AMERICA'S INSURANCE CENTRE.**

The tendency in this vicinity is still towards consolidation in fire insurance. This consolidation has appeared in the re-insurance by a number of the companies of large portions of their lines in other corporations, and the prospect is that several of the re-insuring concerns may retire altogether. This will be regarded as a misfortune, because the facilities for insurance are none too large now, and not infrequently concerns of a doubtful character must be drawn upon to furnish the required amounts of protection.

This tendency towards consolidation has not yet reached the life insurance companies as an actual fact, but for a long time the air has been filled with rumours concerning the sale of the control of several of the stock life insurance companies of this city. These same rumours have been abroad before, and nothing has ever come of them, but they are so persistent and so oft repeated that many people believe that a great consolidation will some day be made embracing three or more of the less important proprietary companies.

The list of estimates furnished by the life insurance companies, as to the amount of their writings for the year, show that upon the whole considerable gains will be made. The increases will, of course, be largely accomplished by the five or six leaders in the business. It is generally conceded, I believe, that more conservative methods are slowly but surely being brought into the management of the life insurance companies, and it has not come any too soon. It is true that no companies of any consequence have been wrecked of recent years, but the best interests of policyholders demand a better conservation of forces, and, if possible, a more economical plan of conduct. It is good to be able to believe that reform is actually on the way, if not already here, in the matter of life insurance management.

It is semi-officially announced that the Mutual Life Insurance Company will place all its new commission accounts for the coming year upon the flat brokerage basis, allowing no renewals upon new contracts. This has occasioned considerable surprise in view of the fact that the general tendency has been in exactly the opposite direction. This may be merely an experiment on the part of the Mutual Life, and, if so, I am inclined to think that it will be ready to abandon the trial at the end of the first year.

So far as can now be seen, 1901 has been a profitable year for the fire companies as relates to their experience in this city. There have been no large conflagrations and no other excessive losses of any kind. On the other hand, rates have been steadily raised, to an extent, in fact, which has sometimes provoked criticism. This has so far enlarged the premium income that unless heavy losses are reported as occurring during the very last day or days of the year there will be an extremely low loss ratio in the metropolitan district.

QUERIST.

New York, January 1, 1902.

INCANDESCENT LIGHTS.

THE EDITOR.—I have read with interest the letter from Mr. C. E. L. Jarvis, of St. John, N.B., in your issue of 27th inst., with regard to fires caused through incandescent electric lighting, and beg to state that I had an almost exactly similar experience in Guelph, in January last, also in a dry goods shop, where, from some cause an incandescent burner, hanging from ceiling in basement, directly over a long table upon which was piled a lot of stock, melted the brass burner and the wire depending from ceiling sufficiently to cause the burner to fuse and drop upon table, where it did some \$200 worth of damage to the stock, and, but for its early discovery

and prompt extinguishment by assured, would have soon resulted in a serious fire.

I fancy these instances are caused by some defect in the transformer thus allowing a heavier current to enter premises than these incandescent fixtures are capable of carrying with safety.

Yours truly,

CHARLES D. CORY.

Toronto, December 28, 1901.

CALENDARS AND DIARIES, 1902.

Hearty thanks are tendered for the following Diaries and Calendars for 1902.

The Anglo-American Fire Insurance Co. sends a pocket-book diary, so also the Ontario Bank, both of which are neat and convenient. Messrs. Eastmure & Lightbourne's calendar is a card on which on the right hand is an illuminated draped shield, with the inscription, "*Memoria in Aeterna*," V.R., Obili, 1901; on the left, a cluster of shields standing out in a blaze of sunbeams; this is to commemorate the "Visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York to Canada, 1901." The Calendar bears the names of the Ontario Accident, Lloyd's Plate Glass, Registry Co. of North America, the Queen City Plate Glass, etc., Co. The New York Life sends a pamphlet containing its 57th annual report, etc. The coloured title page is a very fine specimen of illuminating.

WALL CALENDARS.—The above are all quite small, the following are for display. The Liverpool & London & Globe is a study in black and white, which is now so fashionable with artists. The effect is severe but business-like; it will be like the undecorated American ambassador at a Court function, who is highly distinguished by being alone in a plain style of costume. The Canada Life card aims at clearness and sobriety of colour, the prevailing tone being French grey or Dove colour, picked out with white. The Guardian Fire and Life also eschews gay colours, the calendar proper has white letters and figures on a ground of neutral tint. The effect is restful and agreeable to the eye. The Company's name might have been made more prominent with advantage to the general effect of the calendar, which will be a favourite for use, though its colours are too modest to have much pictorial charm.

The Royal Insurance Co. is nothing if not patriotic. Its picture illustration represents a manly looking gunner of H. M. S. Royal resting on a cannon, enjoying a quiet smoke, and above the picture are the Royal standard and the Union Jack. The illustration is highly effective. The Queen Insurance Co. appropriately presents us with a portrait of Her Majesty, Queen Alexandra, and medallions of H. M.'s father and mother, the King and Queen of Denmark. The portrait is artistically executed. Were it not so the picture would be too obtrusive, but the Queen has features so beautiful and her nature is so lovely as to give her face an enduring fascination. The Imperial Life calendar is assertive; it will challenge attention wherever placed. The illustration is composite. Britannia is represented waving the Union Jack, and, apparently, calling upon the whole universe and the powers of the air to note that the Imperial is "First and Paramount," etc. The date card is devoted to advertising the Company's claims to support. No hiding light under a bushel for the Imperial.

The Northern Assurance Co. must have had a gloriously good year, for it has burst into song and cheering. The illustration heading the date card represents a group of imperial soldiers and sailors of different races engaged in singing God save the King! while over them floats the Royal standard. The scene is rather too exciting for a