as an Assurer who has been over-charged for one or two years, has surely an equal claim for return with one who has paid for a longer period.

The diminution of the profits this day declared may in this respect prove beneficial, as it will tend to show these objectors that this Company is only dividing the profits *actually realized* ; but there are doubtless several who will not be quite satisfied with our course until the experience of many years will have shown its safety. *

The Chairman further expressed himself as instructed by the Board to assure the Shareholders that it was the wish of the Directors to give every information respecting the business of the Company which they might seek ; that in fact they would be pleased to reply to questions, as it was their desire to exhibit, so far as they could, the position of the Company, and to leave no room for doubt as to its prosperity, or the care they had endeavored to exercise in its management.

A Shareholder enquired, Whether any loss had been suffered on the investments ?

The Chairman replied that on the contrary in the First Annual Report, a sum of £22 10s. had been mentioned as written off, in consequence of the depreciation of Bank Stock ; and that this same Stock had now risen to a rate which more than covered the loss. That no other loss has been sustained, and that the interest upon only

* The valuations should, if possible, be made *yearly*. No check which can be devised is so likely to be useful as yearly valuation ; and it is absolutely necessary to any system which gives the real amount of their premiums to the Assured. * * * * And in conjunction with yearly valuations should come yearly divisions of Profits, or something equivalent. There is, I believe, a prejudice against frequent divisions, in the minds of many, who have derived their ideas on the subject from the former practice of offices. But surely, provided that the proper amount of profit be divided yearly, and no more, it matters nothing whether the apportionment be made seven times in seven years, or once only, as far as security is concerned. For it is to be remembered, that yearly division of profits does not imply an annual expenditure, but only an annual distribution of future expenditure. In septennial divisions, one of two things always takes place : either the profits are made contingent upon a party surviving one or more periods of division, which creates great inequalities between the lot of different persons (the very thing an Assurance office was intended to avoid) ; or it declares beforehand what the profits shall be during periods of seven years. In the latter case the annual division is unquestionably the more safe, since it is easier to predict the capabilities of one year, than of seven.
[Professor Augustus DeMorgan, Essay on Probabilities, p. 278.