

REVIEWS.

INSURANCE AGAINST LOSS OF PROFITS BY FIRE (CONSEQUENTIAL LOSS). By Alex. B. Wright. London, C. & E. Layton, 1s. 6d. net.

This recent publication incorporates a paper read by Mr. Wright before the Insurance Institute of Liverpool. Mr. Wright deals with the main principles of Consequential Loss insurance, the publication being intended to give the reader a general knowledge of the subject. Mr. Wright writes clearly and with an obviously intimate knowledge of his subject and the book is one which will, no doubt, be of distinct service as a text book.

THE LARGER ASPECTS OF SOCIALISM. By William English Walling. The Macmillan Company of Canada, Toronto. Price, \$1.50.

Mr. Walling is already known for his learned book "Socialism as it is." In the present volume he deals exclusively with the larger aspects of Socialism, its intellectual and spiritual side and quotes copiously from pragmatic and Socialist writers on every point discussed.

FIRE COMMISSIONER'S JURISDICTION.

The question of the extent of the powers of the Montreal Fire Commissioner has come up in the case of Mr. Robillard de Meziel, on whose behalf application was made for the issue of a writ of Habeas Corpus in the Montreal Courts on Wednesday. It will be in recollection that the arrest of Mr. de Meziel was ordered by the Fire Commissioner, a short time ago, because at the investigation into a fire which took place at his residence, 293 Sherbrooke Street west on April 4, he declined to answer questions put to him as to how he became possessed of a collection of valuable pictures, for the damage of which a large claim was made.

Before Mr. Justice Beaudin, it was argued by Mr. L. A. David, counsel for Mr. de Meziel, that, though in virtue of certain provisions of the Revised Statutes the Fire Commissioner had the necessary jurisdiction to enquire into the circumstances of a fire which had destroyed a building or other immovable property, he had not the power to make queries of a witness as to the manner in which he had come into the ownership of certain moveable property, which had been consumed by the flames.

The Commissioner, according to Mr. David, had the right to enquire into the circumstances which led up to the fire resulting in the destruction of immovables but not of moveables. The Commissioner, he proceeded, had the right to enquire into the causes of a fire which destroyed immovables, but he could not force a witness to answer a question calling upon him to state by what title he possessed any of the destroyed property.

On the other hand, Mr. J. N. Decarie, K.C., acting for the Attorney General, submitted that the Fire Commissioner was vested with the same powers as an investigating magistrate. Hence, he had the jurisdiction to make enquiry into all the circumstances which led up to the outbreak of any given fire. Mr. Justice Beaudin took the point *en délibéré*.

INSURANCE NOTES & NEWS

You needn't worry. The fire companies will not break their agreement to write no business in Missouri.—*Rough Notes*.

Victim of street car accident (glancing at caller's card)—"I guess you're an ambulance chaser, aren't you?"

Lawyer (blandly)—"That's rather a cruel name, old man. Why not call me a settlement worker."

Nearly all the representative life insurance companies made reductions in their expense ratios on the business of 1912—some of them very marked reductions.—*Argus*.

Soliciting life insurance, already much easier than it once was, although by no means a mere pastime, promises to become even less difficult during the coming years.—*Ibid*.

The third annual convention of the International Association of Casualty and Surety Underwriters will be held July 8 to 10 at the Chateau Frontenac, Quebec. The programme will be announced at an early date.

It is reported that team insurance has of late developed into one of the high loss ratio producing elements in the large cities of the United States for the liability companies. This is said to be especially true of slow moving wagons which permit children on roller skates to "hitch behind."

While there is still unquestionably a large proportion of waste business, due to the lack of persistency in premium payments by many persons, yet the idea seems to be steadily gaining ground that when the first premium has been paid every effort should be made to continue the policy in force.—*The Spectator*, N.Y.

The New York Insurance Department has completed its examination of the Plate Glass Underwriters' Association and the Plate Glass Service and Information Bureau. The examiners found much to criticise as regards the making of rates and the discriminations which develop under the present systems. As regards the individual rates of the local association, the examiners say they "are a travesty upon the principles of insurance."

The situation in Missouri inspires the *Argus* to the following pathetic symphony:—"I must be shown," Missouri said, when hard of heart and thick of head. "Your barons bold can't tread on me; I'll hang them to a upas tree." "I'm being shown," Missouri cries, in anguished tones that reach the skies. "Come back, come back, O barons, dear; we're in a heap of trouble here." But barons had and barons bold decline Missouri's proffered fold; reject Missouri's tainted bait, content to bide their time and wait.

According to calculations made by the N. Y. *Spectator*, the percentage to mean policies in force of terminations by surrender and lapse of 27 insurance companies was last year 5.17 compared with 5.05 in 1911. The advance is accounted for by the increase in the volume of new business written. In 1906, the rate was 8.93.