

Companies who are members of the Western Union of Fire Underwriters have decided to suspend business in the State of Missouri at the end of the present month, on account of the enactment of a new and drastic anti-trust law. This will be a serious matter for both the communities affected and the insurance companies. To the companies it means the cutting off of a premium income of \$9,000,000 a year and to thousands of agents the loss of their occupations.

The *Weekly Underwriter* summarises recent conditions in the State of Missouri as follows:—"The companies complied with the Oliver law at an expense of \$200,000 and general inconvenience. During its existence they were harassed by the unreasonableness of the insurance superintendent. The law has now been arbitrarily repealed by the Legislature, the labor to comply with it has gone for nothing, and an amendment has been added to the anti-trust law making it *prima facie* evidence of unlawful combination if a company is a member of any association that recommends rates, or uses "any rate book, paper or card containing any insurance rate, prepared, published, kept or furnished by any person."

"On the strength of that the Attorney General has decreed that conditions prior to the passage of the Oliver law are resumed and that rates must come down or he will begin prosecutions. Considering that the loss ratio in Missouri in the last two years has been seventy per cent. and has not improved since the beginning of this year, the demand for lower rates creates a situation that is intolerable and the companies must simply cease to do business under it."

Market and Financial Gossip

The Calgary incident is the sort of thing which does Canada no good in the London market. It would be interesting to hear the explanation of it.

Whenever the decennial revision of the Bank Act is being considered, the banks should be considered rather as public benefactors than as supplicants.—*Sir Edmund Walker.*

The Montreal alderman who a short time ago wanted to start a municipal bank has now found supporters (with variations) in a Toronto controller and Regina alderman. How brimful of brilliant ideas these municipal amateurs are.

Wayagamack Pulk & Paper announces the sale of an additional \$500,000 first mortgage 6 per cent. bonds for the purpose of installing a plant for the manufacture of certain fine grades of paper. The bonds just sold bring the total issue outstanding up to \$3,500,000.

It would not be wise to overlook the fact that the activity of trade (in Canada) has been stimulated to some extent by the spending of profits arising out of real estate transactions, nor can it be expected that profits on the same scale from this source, as

well as the expenditure they give rise to, will continue indefinitely.—*C. W. Tomkinson, chairman Bank of B.N.A.*

New Bank Branches:—Comerco, at Parksville, B.C., under the supervision of Nanaimo manager; British, at Bella Coola, B.C., under temporary management of Mr. J. N. Cran.

Money is very tight in England at the present time, particularly from the borrower's standpoint. The reasons given for this are the increased cost of living, the flood of borrowers desiring money, the political unrest, and the war scare.—*Hume B. Cronyn, manager Huron & Eric L. & S. Co.*

What is probably a record decline between transactions for the Montreal Exchange, is furnished by Russell Motor Common, dealt in this week at 40½. The last sale of a full lot on the local exchange was in March of last year and was at 104¾. The difference between the two transactions is 63¾ points.

Carter-Crume's net earnings for 1912 were \$135,115 compared with \$109,005 in 1911. Balance at credit of profit and loss carried forward is \$192,042. The directors have in contemplation calling a special meeting of shareholders during the present year in order that they may submit a plan for the exchange of the stock of the Carter-Crume Company for that of the American Sales Book Company, Limited.

A note by a New York authority that the making of mergers business is at a rather low ebb in the United States just now reminds us that the same is true in Canada. The man who at the present time is in a great hurry to make a fortune is advised to turn his attention to something else. The merger road to social destination is closed for the time being.

According to the annual report of Western Canada Power, this company, at the commencement of its second year, has contracted for the supply of 65,000 h.p., and an additional 5,000 h.p. of contracts are now under negotiation. "We do not believe," observes Mr. C. H. Cahan, the president, "that any new hydro-electric undertaking, in building up its business in new territory, has ever obtained better results during the first fifteen months of its operation." The Company's total assets at December 31, were \$8,339,867 including \$8,159,620, cost of property, franchises and works. Current liabilities are accounts payable \$164,079 and bank loans and overdrafts, \$157,863. Balance at credit of profit and loss account is \$13,311.

It looks as though the Canadian municipalities will soon be over-feeding the London market again. In addition to the new loans reported in this column last week as having been successfully negotiated, it is now cabled that Regina has issued £550,000 5 per cents at 101. Edmonton has succeeded in placing \$10,840,000 5 p.c. debentures at 95 with the firm of Kleinwort, Sons & Co., London. "Edmonton is now financed for 1903," Mayor Short, of that city, is reported as stating, "and it will not be necessary to place any more debentures this year." We should hope not. There are other borrowers who would like to have a look-in some time.