

maintain the unusual and unjustified liberality displayed toward the limited payment life policy-holder.

Even if the effect of this be conceded not really to be a violation of the law, or that the anti-rebate or anti-discrimination laws did not have any such thing in view, and did not contemplate the correction of any such evil, nevertheless it must surely be admitted that the condition is not a satisfactory one; and that there is no reason why the holder of an ordinary life policy should not receive the same liberality of treatment as is accorded to the holder of a limited payment life policy; or that the holder of a limited payment life policy should be granted a privilege, or that discrimination should be exercised in his favor, which is not granted to the ordinary life policy-holder.

FIRE INSURANCE OUTLOOK DEPRESSING.

The outlook for fire underwriting in the United States is not considered good. Insurance stocks of high grade are most significantly out of demand, and it is thought that the closing months of the present year will see some withdrawals from the field. The *Commercial Bulletin* thus comments upon the fire insurance business for the half year:—

The fire insurance companies have not as yet made up their semi-annual statements, and so the exact results of their operations during the first half of 1898 are not yet known. Their premium receipts, losses incurred, security values and some other points can, however, readily be obtained by their managers, and from these it is seen that the underwriting record for the first six months of 1898 is far from being as favorable as that for the same period in 1897. To some extent, however, this will be made up by the advance in security values, where the assets are invested largely in high-grade bonds.

Several causes contribute to this showing, and the conditions which have adversely affected the business generally may be briefly touched upon; but it must be remembered that some individual companies by particularly good or bad fortune, able or weak management, fare better or worse than the average. Probably the main cause for the lessening of profits is to be found in the reductions in rates which commenced early in 1897 and have continued steadily throughout the country. Sometimes these have affected merely single risks; frequently whole classes, and often a large section. Taken altogether, they mean a decided diminution in premium income. From managing underwriters who have compared their statistics it is learned that the average rate has dropped as compared with the first half of 1897, about 15 per cent. In view of the fact that the July statements will practically reflect the experience on the business taken during 1897, when rates had not been reduced so far, it seems likely that the exhibit for the last six months of 1898 will show a more decided diminution in comparative gain than the half year just closed.

The break in Metropolitan District rates this spring will have little if any effect on the July statements, as companies have had practically no experience at earning premiums at the current market rates on business in New York city and vicinity, and local losses have been very light since the smash. The greatly increased number of competitors for fire risks has had the effect of making it very difficult for even the largest and most popular companies to keep up their premium incomes; and when the returns are at hand they will reveal that many ably-managed companies suffer a falling off in receipts. To some extent this

will help out the surplus owing to the cutting down of the re-insurance reserve.

From underwriters who carefully investigate the details of their business, it is ascertained that the number of small losses has materially increased, and so much so as to add to the aggregate insured loss quite a little. This state of affairs they ascribe to the unrest caused by the Klondike excitement, and a desire to go to the Spanish war. They think that to these may be attributed the increase in the number of small mercantile and dwelling losses. Taken altogether, the fire underwriting outlook is depressing, and veteran underwriters are operating very conservatively. The bad faith, exhibited in the late Tariff Association of New York is also sapping the strength of other rating organizations, and the average rate is more likely to fall further than to regain its recent drop.

A GOOD BANKER, YACHTSMAN, AND ARCHITECT.

Mr. H. C. McLeod, General Manager of the Bank of Nova Scotia, whose fame as a yacht designer extends from Lake Minnetonka to Prince Edward Island, has just launched a new addition to the fleet of the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron. In the first trial of her speed, on Saturday last, she captured the handsome "Crescent" cup, presented to the R.N.S.Y. Squadron by Admiral Erskine and the officers of his flagship, "Crescent," defeating the celebrated Fife cutters and all-comers.

The Halifax yachtsmen contemplate sending a McLeod one-rater to compete with Mr. Duggan's fleet for the privilege of defending the Seawanhaka Cup next year.

THE HALF YEAR'S FIRES.

The *Review* (N.Y.) says:—The fire loss of the United States and Canada for the month of June, as compiled from our daily records, amounts to \$9,206,900. This is so much larger than the total for the month of June, 1897, as to make the total for the half year of 1898 exceed that for the same period of 1896. This will be seen from the subjoined table:—

	1896.	1897.	1898.
January.....	\$11,040,000	\$12,049,700	\$9,472,500
February.....	9,730,100	8,676,750	12,629,300
March.....	11,830,600	10,502,950	7,645,200
April.....	12,010,600	10,833,000	8,211,000
May.....	10,618,000	10,193,600	11,072,200
June.....	5,721,250	5,684,450	9,206,900
Totals.....	\$63,959,550	\$57,940,450	\$58,237,100

During June there were 166 fires of a greater destructiveness than \$10,000 each, which may be classified as below:—

\$10,000 to \$20,000.....	61
20,000 to 30,000.....	38
30,000 to 50,000.....	25
50,000 to 75,000.....	18
75,000 to 100,000.....	7
100,000 to 200,000.....	7
200,000 to 600,000.....	10
Total.....	166

The principal losses in June were:—

Superior, Wis., chair factory.....	\$200,000
Portsmouth, Ohio, rolling mill and steel plant.....	300,000
Detroit, Mich., business block.....	295,000
Park City, Utah, various.....	600,000
Albuquerque, N. M., opera house and other.....	200,000
Lincoln, Neb., wholes'le grocery and cream'y.....	200,000
Louisville, Ky., iron foundry and other.....	275,000
Philadelphia, Pa., oilcloth factory.....	200,000
Peoria, Ill., distillery.....	200,000
New Whatcom, Wash., lumber mill and yards.....	400,000