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THE LEGAL STAMP DUTY ON RE-ASSURANCE POLICIES, EFFECTED BY WAY OF GUARANTEE ON A COPY OF THE ORIGINAL POLICY.

To the Editor of the Journal of the Institute of Actuaries.

SIR,—Up to the present it has been, I believe, the general practice to stamp re-assurances in the same way as direct policies, the result being that the Government receive double stamp duty on the amount re-assured.

This society has recently obtained an adjudication of the proper stamp which should be placed on re-assurances, effected by way of guarantee on a copy of the original policy, and it would appear that a sixpenny stamp is legally sufficient for this purpose, whatever be the amount of the policy. It would also appear that the copy policy does not require to be authenticated with a shilling stamp.

The means adopted of getting the duty assessed were as follows:

The original policy, kindly lent us by the re-assuring office, was lodged at Somerset House, together with our guarantee endorsed upon a copy of it. We were then required to stamp our guarantee with a sixpenny stamp, and supply the authorities with a copy of the original policy, endorsed with a copy of our guarantee, and after some delay our guarantee was returned to us marked—

I did not understand that any special form or style of guarantee would be insisted on, the view taken by Somerset House being, it seemed, that a re-assurance in this form was of the nature of an indemnity.

I thought of raising the question as to the stamp duty on an ordinary policy granted by one office to another and bearing a re-assurance endorsement, but did not do so at the moment, thinking

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such a course might perhaps upset the whole negotiation. I propose to do so at a later date.

I am, Sir, Your obedient servant,

E. COLQUHOUN.

Legal and General Life Assurance Office, 10, Fleet Street, London, E.C. 24 July 1889.

[It appears probable that if the agreement by the re-assuring company were under seal a 10s. stamp would be necessary. The agreement above referred to would be under hand merely.—ED. J.I.A.]