

**INCREASING FIRE LOSSES.**

Those who saw reason to attribute last year's falling off in the amount of the national fire loss to a more general adoption of measures of fire prevention will probably be tempted by this year's increased fire loss to modify their opinion. But the fire loss is not a constant, and its variability arises from many causes not easy to be classified in the order of their relative importance. Periods of commercial depression and of great commercial activity are alike apt to be marked by unusually heavy fire losses due in the first case to an increased moral hazard and in the second to carelessness. A conflagration which may double the normal amount of the annual fire loss may arise from any one of a large number of trivial causes. With the steady increase in the number of combustible buildings the annual fire loss must naturally be expected to increase unless the increase is checked by effective measures of fire prevention. And the amount of combustible building construction is so immense that in the absence of any attempt at fire prevention on a national scale, such efforts as are now being made—almost exclusively by fire underwriters—to reduce the fire loss cannot reasonably be expected to produce any very appreciable effect for many years to come. This may not be a very cheerful outlook, but there is nothing to be gained by shutting one's eyes to facts. So while the New York superintendent of insurance is undoubtedly justified in saying that "it is not perhaps too much to infer that the persistent and widespread activity of the constantly increasing number of fire prevention organizations had its influence and effect" in reducing last year's fire loss, and that influence is steadily increasing, too much should not be expected of it.—*Boston Standard.*

**TIME OF PAYING FIRE LOSSES.**

Many of the managers believe, and I agree fully with them, that companies should take sixty days for the payment of all losses, which would give ample time for a thorough investigation of the loss, and would allow wholesalers to protect their interests by being able to garnishee the loss for amounts due them. In several instances it has developed that, if the company had waited sixty days for the payment of the loss, they would have been able to secure evidence which would have convicted the insured of arson, or at least have given the company an opportunity to have made a compromise settlement.

It is a foregone conclusion that many of the fires to-day, if not caused by the insured, are welcomed because they know that immediate payment of the loss will be made. If the insured knew that he would have to wait sixty days from the time his loss was adjusted before payment could be made he might decide that cash could be secured in other ways quicker than by destroying his property. The best reason, however, for discontinuing the immediate payment of losses is that it will give the companies ample time for investigation of the claim.—*T. H. Williams, before Fire Underwriters' Association of the Pacific.*

It is understood in London that plans are making rapid progress for a big international bank, Government supported, to aid British trade throughout the world. The leading British banks will be jointly interested.

**A CASUALTY AMALGAMATION.**

It has been decided to amalgamate the Canadian Casualty & Boiler Insurance Company and the General Accident Assurance Company of Canada under the latter's name. Both amalgamating companies are subsidiaries of the General Accident, Fire and Life Assurance Corporation, of Perth, Scotland, which owns practically all the stock of both, except qualifying shares, and for years both have been under the same management with Mr. John J. Durance, of Toronto, as secretary and manager. At December 31st last, the total assets of the Canadian Casualty and Boiler were \$153,825 and of the General Accident of Canada \$275,358. The assets of the new organisation will be therefore in the neighborhood of \$430,000. The following lines of business are transacted: steam boiler, personal accident, sickness, theatre liability, automobile property damage, automobile liability, public liability, employers' liability, elevator liability, teams liability, monthly payment accident and sickness.

**INSURANCE SUPERINTENDENTS' CONFERENCE.**

The insurance superintendents of the four Western provinces held a second conference recently at Regina for the discussion of problems with a view to common action. Some of the topics under discussion were: Fraternal insurance society contracts; advisability of standardizing accident insurance contracts; adoption of the Saskatchewan hail insurance conditions for general use throughout the West; general regulations for hail insurance writing, relating especially to the commencement of liability of insuring companies.

The conference was also attended by the fire chiefs of Saskatchewan, who are officers under the Provincial Fire Prevention Act, which came into force on June 1st.

**NORTH BRITISH AND MERCANTILE INSURANCE COMPANY.**

We understand Mr. D. C. Haldeman, Life Manager of the North British & Mercantile, at the Head Office, Edinburgh, Scotland, who in 1910 assumed the duties of Home Fire Manager at the directors' desire in addition to those of Life Manager, has at his own special request been relieved of the Fire Management. Mr. Arthur Worley, previously joint Foreign Fire Manager, has been appointed Fire Manager at the Head Office; Mr. L. Sinclair is the Foreign Fire Manager, and Mr. L. G. Lambert is now Home Fire Manager.

The Northern Life of London, Ont., has inaugurated a women's department to specialise on the endowment plan for women and children.

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Prospects of war with Mexico are making the American life companies think about "war clauses" for newly-issued policies, and additional premiums. War clauses and charges have, of course, been enforced by American companies since the outbreak of the European war in the case of subjects of the belligerent nations, but the new developments necessitate a wide extension.