

I would not pay very much attention to statements of this kind appearing in an ordinary newspaper; but when these statements appear in the Monetary Times, which is recognized as one of the leading authorities on financial affairs in Canada, they deserve some attention on the part of the insurance branch of the Department of Finance. I find the following in a later edition of the Monetary Times:

It is quite evident that the affairs of the Union Life need attention right way, but everywhere almost we hear that 'Mr. Evans, the president, is away.' It is time Mr. Evans, the president, was home again, setting his financial house in order. If he does not recognize the need of his presence in Toronto, the Department of Insurance should.

Now, I desire to call the attention of the House to what appears in Toronto Saturday Night. I do not know how well qualified Toronto Saturday Night is to discuss questions of insurance, but I know that when the man, who writes the financial column of Saturday Night, speaks with reference to affairs in western Canada, he generally strikes the nail on the head and I would not be surprised if he again strikes the nail on the head with reference to the affairs of this company. On March 29, 1913, Saturday Night contained the following:

Another disquieting feature of the Union Life financial statement is that a very considerable proportion of the assets consists of securities of, or loans against securities of, companies which are controlled by H. Pollman Evans. These stocks to a certain extent, greater or less, depend again on other Pollman Evans' companies. They are, in fact, so interwoven that it is impossible to form even an estimate of their relations and values. However, some light can be thrown on the situation by the statements covering the National Land, Fruit and Packing Company now in liquidation, and of which Mr. Evans was the promoter. We have before us a report issued on December 9, 1911, which showed assets of \$1,485,825, and liabilities to the public of \$62,000, yet a few months after it was in liquidation the later report of the liquidator shows liabilities of \$165,459, and the assets, excluding orchard leases, are \$206,389, and 'this should be materially reduced.' One item of assets, \$372,956 investment account, appears to have disappeared altogether.

Saturday Night goes on to say:

Taken all together, there appears to be a pretty mess which sooner or later will take a deal of straightening out on the part of the Insurance Department, for it does not take a prophet to tell where the Union Life is headed for.

I said at the outset of my remarks that I did not know anything personally about the Union Life Assurance Company and that I did not know any of the men who are interested in it. From letters which I have received from policy-holders residing in my part of the country, I know that there is a great feeling

of unrest as to what they should do in regard to their insurance premiums. The Minister of Finance knows the terms of the Insurance Act. I refer particularly to sections 36, 37 and 38. Section 36 of the Insurance Act, chapter 34 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, says:

The superintendent may under orders from the minister make inspection visits to companies.

It goes on to provide that he can make examinations under oath. Section 38 provides:

If it appears to the superintendent that the assets of any company are insufficient to justify its continuance of business under the requirements of this Act in that behalf respecting the amount of deposits and assets, or that it is unsafe for the public to effect insurance with it, he shall make a special report on the affairs of such company to the minister:

Then sub-section 2 of section 38 says:

If the minister, after full consideration of the report, and after a reasonable time has been given to the company to be heard by him, and upon such further inquiry and investigation as he sees proper to make, reports to the Governor in Council that he agrees with the superintendent in the opinion so expressed in his report the Governor in Council may, if he also concurs in such opinion, suspend or cancel the license of such company.

Then sub-section 3 says:

Such company shall, during such suspension or cancellation be held to be unlicensed and unauthorized to do further business.

I would not have brought this matter up at all if I thought it would do any injury to the company. I brought it up simply in the interest of the policy-holders, of whom there are about fifty thousand according to this report. I submit to the Minister of Finance that, if an investigation has taken place and if the company has been found to be on a solvent basis, then the policy-holders of the company should know it. If the company has been found by the investigation conducted by the Government to be on an insolvent basis, then the policy-holders are equally entitled to the information in order that they may protect themselves in future. I simply urge upon the Minister of Finance, if no investigation has taken place, that there should be some investigation owing to the statements made in the Monetary Times.

Hon. W. T. WHITE (Minister of Finance): I must say that my hon. friend has taken a very unusual course—I shall not characterize it in any other way—in passing a note over to me about three or five minutes before he started to speak, telling me that he proposes to discuss this matter.

Mr. MARTIN: I did not know that I was wrong in not advising the minister. I