

## ROYAL COMMISSIONERS REPORT FOR THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO.

Mr. Justice Masten, who was appointed to enquire into the fire insurance business in Ontario, has completed his report. While the full official report is not before us, we understand Mr. Justice Masten is of the opinion that Compulsory Note insurance is not practicable or desirable. The lack of data available, the huge labour reinvestigation and the general disruption of business are given as reasons against the adoption of the system at present. The work of the Canadian Underwriters' Association is commended in the report, which says: "The combination tends strongly to maintain the solvency of the companies, to stabilize the rate, to eliminate discriminations and to assist in controlling the expenses of carrying on the business." However, the report recommends that the association "ought to be fully subject to the supervision and control of the State."

Similar supervision of all other rate making bodies is also recommended by the report. This includes all insurance associations, writing boiler, automobile and casualty policies. The prohibition of rates discriminating unfairly between risks of essentially the same hazard is recommended, with the note that the superintendent should have the power to cancel any such discriminatory rate. Further recommendations are:

1. Power to the superintendent to inquire, mediate and report in respect to any differences regarding any insurance matter. Such a measure, adds the report, would cause little disruption of business, and would be more practical than more drastic legislation.

2. That all companies be required to keep their records in such a way as to classify the business done by them, and to show in their annual reports to the Department not only the amount of business done by them in the province, and the underwriters' profit, but also the profits made in each of the several classes of risks assumed by them; and for this purpose a form of return should be agreed upon and settled with the Dominion Insurance Department, so that the returns made to Ottawa and to Toronto may be identical.

Justice Masten also recommends an examination by the Insurance Department of all applicants for licenses as agents, brokers or adjusters. In case of a refusal the matter might be taken before a judge. These licenses should be liable to cancellation, and the price fixed on a sliding scale, with the minimum fixed at \$5 and going up to \$100 as a maximum for Toronto. "I am of the opinion," says Justice Masten, "that the licenses granted by the department should permit an agent to act only in certain classes of insurance." The report adds that these provisions should be made with respect to adjusters, as in New York. The cancellation of a license by the superintendent

could also be taken before a judge of the Court of Appeals.

"Consideration by the Legislature of the desirability of limiting commission by statute," is another recommendation. The judge, however, points out that in his opinion profits are not excessive at present. The fixing of maximum rates at present is not thought to be warranted. The report states that a board of business men and experts should be appointed to co-operate with the fire marshal and to make recommendations which may be given the force of law by orders-in-Council with respect to building regulations and fire prevention generally. To reduce the rates of fire insurance premiums, his lordship says progress can only be made along the line of fire prevention and reduction. He points out that the provincial losses for 1917 amounted to \$4.61 per capita, and advocates a concentration of effort in preventing fires where large losses are most likely to occur, rather than a diffused effort to prevent all fires.

"Compulsory annual stocktaking in certain cases and deposit of the stock sheets with an independent custodian outside the warehouse or factory," reads another recommendation aimed at cutting down fire losses in many cases. The report adds that uniform policy form should not be adopted and that there should be no prohibition of insuring property in the province through agents resident outside the province.

### NORTH AMERICAN LIFE ASSCE. CO., TORONTO.

February was another record month for the North American Life. Over \$2,000,000 in received business, the largest yet in the history of the Company.

Mr. A. R. Piper, Moose Jaw, was the North American Life's leading producer for the month of February.

Mr. H. W. Slipchenko, Saskatoon, sent in the largest number of applications for the month.

In the Big 3 Contest Messrs. A. R. Piper, Moose Jaw; R. G. McFarlane, St. John, N.B., and W. H. Smith, North Bay, lead the Western, Eastern and Central Divisions respectively.

In the Nalaco Cup standing Edmonton Agency, under Manager F. C. Walls, retains the leading position for the month of February.

## CANADIAN BANKING PRACTICE

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