

I may, however, be charged with an unfair comparison, in that I have not taken into consideration the "assets" of the banks and loan companies, whereas I have made the comparison with the assets of the insurance companies on the one hand, and the capital and reserve funds of the other institutions on the other hand. I do not think the course adopted at all unfair for the assets of banks and loan companies, apart from capital and reserve funds, are merely monies borrowed from depositors or bondholders, and invested for the common good. Moreover, it is to be observed that in the statement of assets of the insurance companies I have not included the capital or reserve funds of British and American companies, for the obvious reason that such are not assets in this country; all that has been included is such part of the capital and reserve funds as are directly held in Canada for the benefit of the Canadian people. To add thereto the capital and reserve funds of the British and American offices, would unduly and irrationally inflate the importance of the insurance companies. Bear in mind, if you please, that my only object in making the comparison is to demonstrate the high position held by the insurance companies in the world of finance, and which, taken in conjunction with the importance of the protection offered, leads to no other conclusion than that we may proudly hold up our heads and claim for our allied business interests a position ranking side by side with the others I have specially referred to.

A few words will not be out of place on the *growth* of the insurance interests of the Dominion, following which I shall only briefly allude to some phases of insurance legislation, and then allow your imagination to picture the thousand and one things one might, could or should have said on the whole subject. Our experiences, it must be borne in mind, date from 1869, between the act of Confederation, the commencement of the Dominion, and this year we have little or no data to go upon, but since 1869—our starting point—we have the records of the insurance department at Ottawa, which for our purposes may be regarded as a correct and complete return of the Companies reporting to them under the Dominion Insurance Act.

For the purpose of convenience of arrangement let me deal first with the *fire business*. In 1869 the fire business of Canada was transacted by twenty companies, of which five were Canadian, twelve British and three American, between them they had a premium income of \$1,785,539, with an amount of insurance in force at the close of the year of \$188,359,809. In 1900 the business was transacted by thirty-eight companies, of which nine were Canadian, twenty-one were British and eight were American, they had a premium income of \$8,331,948, with an amount of insurance in force at the close of the year of \$992,332,360. In 1875 the companies of Canadian origin reached eleven in number, but at the close of last year only three of these were in existence, and if rumor speaks correctly this number has within the past few days been further reduced to two. I am afraid to give you the record of the companies of Canadian origin which since 1875 have been born amidst scenes of rejoicing, but which have perished by the roadside after fighting to the last ditch. Of the British companies which were doing business in 1875 four have ceased to be, whilst one has taken out naturalization papers across the line, although still bearing the honored name of "Queen." The three American companies doing business in that year are still with us, profiting where we profit, but alas much more frequently sharing our misfortunes.

The following interesting table will present the growth of the fire business:—

Year.	Premiums received.	Amount of risks in force.
1869.....	\$1,785,539	\$188,359,809
1875.....	3,594,765	364,421,629
1880.....	3,479,577	411,563,271
1890.....	5,836,071	720,679,621
1900.....	8,331,948	992,332,360

It will thus be seen that the growth in this Branch has been steady, continuous and consistent, showing clearly that with

the growing wealth of the country the demand for the protection of the fire companies is as great if not greater than ever.

Coming now to the life business (and I only propose to refer in anything like detail to these two branches), we find a singular transformation in the situation of 1900 as compared with 1869 in the chief domicile of the companies operating in Canada. In 1869 the life business of the Dominion was transacted by twenty-four companies, of which fourteen were British, nine American and one Canadian, these companies between them transacted a business of \$1,238,359 in premiums, with an amount of insurance in force at the close of the year of \$35,680,082. In 1875 there were thirty-six companies transacting business, of which sixteen were British, thirteen were American and seven were Canadian. In 1900 there was one less company doing business, but the relative positions had materially changed, for in this year the British companies had been reduced from sixteen in 1875 to eight; the American companies from thirteen to nine, whilst the Canadian offices had grown in number from seven in 1875 to eighteen, the income this year, *i.e.* 1900, was \$15,006,941 in premiums, with an amount in force at the close of the year of \$543,808,346. You will thus see that whilst Canadian fire offices have been growing fewer the Canadian life offices have been developing at a rapid rate until they now number more than the British and American offices combined. It is not at all difficult to find the reason for this condition of things. Our Dominion is happily possessed of a class of people at once healthy, temperate and rational, where longevity is not an unknown quality, and where, consequently, the life insurance companies can more readily count upon a fair margin of profit for the risks they undertake; success breeds success, and the record of the life business is such as to encourage the control within our own borders of the companies transacting such business. On the other hand our country has been given wood in abundance, not only to mill and ship, but also to use, its use has caused the erection of wooden towns, some of which have in turn been swept from the face of the earth by conflagration; the fire business has been a record of disaster, loss, failure, not in an isolated case nor in any one year, but general and continuous. As success breeds success, so a burned child dreads the fire, and whilst success has given us more native life companies, failure has sadly reduced our old fire companies until, as I have shown you, "there are only a few of us left."

The growth of the life insurance business is well shown in the following table:—

Year.	Premiums.	Amount of risks in force.
1869.....	\$1,238,359	\$35,680,082
1875.....	3,882,387	85,009,264
1880.....	2,721,128	91,272,126
1890.....	8,004,151	248,424,667
1900.....	15,006,941	543,808,346

The period between 1875 and 1880 was in both the fire and life business one of distress and stagnation from causes which everyone will readily appreciate and understand.

Let me say a word or two to you in closing touching legislation and affecting the enormous interests I have spoken of. The figures I have presented to you are not complete, they represent the business of such companies as have been licensed by the Dominion Government and who make reports to them concerning their business and standing. One hundred and three companies last year doing all kinds of insurance business came under the purview of the insurance superintendent. But the Provincial companies, *i.e.*, companies obtaining only a Charter for Provincial purposes do not so report, and whilst I could have obtained all the necessary figures concerning Ontario and Quebec, I could not have done so from the other Provinces, and therefore concluded it better to give you only the results from the Dominion Blue Books. You must, however, bear in mind the unknown quantity thus referred to,