

MR. FRANKLIN WENTWORTH DISCUSSES FIRE PREVENTION.

Mr. Franklin H. Wentworth, secretary of the Boston Fire Prevention Association, addressed a large gathering of Montreal fire insurance men at a luncheon given in the Windsor Hotel on the 22nd instant under the auspices of the Fire Insurance Brokers' Association of this city. The subject of his address, fire waste and fire prevention, was one with which the speaker was evidently familiar, and therefore handled in an able manner. Those present on the occasion, followed with close attention, a very interesting address, on topics that are of vital importance not only to the insurance fraternity, but also to business men generally, and it is hoped that if anything new was learned by those present either in connection with fire waste or fire prevention, the community at large will benefit accordingly from their knowledge obviating the possibility of Mr. Wentworth being likened to the "sower" mentioned in the Bible who went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

Mr. Wentworth stated that in European countries the law against a man responsible for starting a fire was exceedingly severe. According to official information on file in "The Chronicle" library, incendiarism was considered a capital offence in Canada some seventy years ago and a reward of £5,000 (\$25,000) was frequently offered (authorized by the Government of that day) in the case of a suspicious fire for such information as would lead to the conviction of the culprit. This may prove conclusively that in those far off days, people in Canada were either more enlightened, or more concerned about the wanton destruction of property. It might also prove that in the punishment of one of the worst crimes, "incendiarism," the Government of those days had a higher sense of duty to the country, than the Government of to-day. However, this may be, the fire waste in Canada appears to increase as the country grows older, true there are many opposing factors toward obtaining as favourable fire loss ratios as are reported in older countries, such as climatic conditions, and the consequent necessity of the installation of methods of heating that might be considered more dangerous to property than a more simple system of heating prevailing in many older countries where climatic conditions are not so rigorous. There are many other unfavourable conditions existing in Canada which do not exist in countries with a lower loss ratio and this should be considered by those who so frequently make comparisons in public. Taking everything into consideration, the fire waste in Canada might easily be more serious were it not for the effective and zealous work performed by

the tariff companies through the Canadian Fire Underwriters' Association and its large staffs of skilled inspectors and engineers which are maintained by these companies in the interests of their policy-holders.

REPATRIATION COMMITTEE.

Mr. Harry Bragg, Municipal representative of the Repatriation Committee, Ottawa, has addressed the following circular letter to every Municipality in the Dominion, both rural and urban, in English and French. He also states that the Repatriation Committee at Ottawa will be only too glad to answer any enquiries which may be made, with regard to those problems which come within its scope:—

The urgent problems in connection with the demobilization of our army and the re-establishment of industry on a peace basis have led to the formation of the Repatriation Committee, in connection with which I am now acting as the representative of the Municipal organizations of Canada.

The urban and rural municipalities can play a great and important part in the problems of the demobilization period, in giving a "Welcome Home" to the returning soldier and his family, in helping the soldier to secure employment, and generally in assisting him to re-establish himself in civil life.

In every Municipality that has sent soldiers overseas there should be an Honorary Committee of citizens, composed of both men and women, who will assume a measure of responsibility in this important work. There may possibly be such a Committee already in existence in your Municipality, if so we would like to know; if not, I would respectfully urge, on behalf of this Committee, that one should be formed at once. The functions of a "Welcome Home" Committee should be as follows:

- (1) To welcome all returned soldiers and their dependents on their arrival in your locality.
- (2) To receive any complaints from returned soldiers and to forward them to the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment, Ottawa, for investigation.
- (3) To help the returned soldiers to find employment.
- (4) If at any time employment cannot be found in your locality for a returned soldier, to report particulars to the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment.
- (5) If positions exist in your locality for which returned soldiers are not available, to notify the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment, so that men can be sent from the nearest demobilization center to occupy them.
- (6) To co-operate with voluntary organizations.
- (7) To keep a general oversight over the interests of returned soldiers and their families.