

THE OCEAN ACCIDENT AND GUARANTEE CORPORATION.

The 1915 statement of the Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation, a leading member of the group of prominent British insurance companies devoting themselves mainly to casualty business, records a year's operations in which a remarkable success was achieved, considering the adverse circumstances which the Company had to contend with. Not only had conditions arising from the war to be met, but the Company was also faced with the results of legislative activity on this side of the Atlantic, of which one sample was the establishment of Ontario's State compensation scheme. On this point the Chairman (Mr. E. Roger Owen) said some wise words at the Corporation's recent annual meeting. "We are not seriously frightened at the menace," he remarked. "Insurance by the State has already been found to be unsatisfactory for so many reasons that even in those places where the principle is adopted, we feel sure before many years have passed the companies will find themselves reinstated. It is a popular fancy that anybody and everybody can transact insurance business. We, however, who are behind the scenes know otherwise. It is comparatively rare for a new insurance office to arrive even at a period of adolescence. We cannot think that State management will produce any better or more permanent result."

THE YEAR'S BUSINESS.

The year's results now reported by the Corporation are of that highly satisfactory character that only an energetic and skilled administration can produce. For reasons already alluded to, the Corporation for the first time in many years reported a decrease in its premium income in comparison with the preceding year. The falling off, however, is not serious, the present total net premiums reported being \$10,669,535 against \$10,990,445. That a high standard in the quality of the business is maintained may be judged from the claim record. Claims paid and provided for absorb \$5,404,310, a decrease of \$84,000 in comparison with 1914 and giving a proportion of 50.7 per cent. of the premium income, following 49.9 per cent. in 1914 and 53.1 per cent. in 1913. Expenses naturally showed an increase over those of 1914, the present figure of \$4,042,135 comparing with \$3,946,800 in the preceding year. It is to be noted in connection with this item that over \$100,000 expenses were due to the Corporation's action in paying throughout the year the salaries of its employees who are serving with the Colours, while actual payments of income tax, exclusive of that on investments deducted at the source, amounted to over \$340,000.

A STRONG POSITION.

The reserve against unearned premiums is increased from \$4,069,105 to \$4,272,876—the latter amount representing the increased proportion of 40 per cent. of the premium income. From the underwriting and investment balance of \$10,232,408, \$476,970 has been transferred to the investment reserve and general contingency fund, thereby raised to \$1,000,000. This fund is stated to be more than ample to meet the depreciation in the Corporation's investments. The general funds include \$4,000,000 provision for claims outstanding, \$1,500,000 general reserve and \$9,755,438 balance on revenue account, a total of \$15,255,438.

equal to over 140 per cent. of the year's premiums irrespective of the paid-up capital. The assets set out in the balance sheet total \$17,994,212, an increase of over \$1,500,000 upon last year's total of \$16,473,146, the investments being in the highest grades of securities.

THE CORPORATION IN CANADA.

The Ocean has been established in the Canadian field over twenty years and is held in high reputation throughout the Dominion. In the various departments of casualty etc., business its Canadian premium income last year exceeded \$600,000. Additionally a fire insurance department was established in the Dominion last year. The Corporation is fortunate in having as its general manager for Canada and Newfoundland, Mr. C. H. Neely, of Toronto, an underwriter of long experience and marked ability, under whose direction a thoroughly efficient and Dominion wide organisation is administered.

POLICY LOANS OF THE CANADIAN LIFE COMPANIES.

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two or three years, and it is not to be supposed that Canadian life insurance has kept free of the tendency—the tale of present policy loans and surrenders as well as lapses, is good evidence to the contrary. Are not some of the companies and particularly their agents, in their anxiety for new business, partly responsible for this condition of affairs, through their lack of care in seeing that individuals have no more insurance than they can reasonably carry. What is wanted, if life insurance is to render its best service to the community, is not that a large number of individuals should be loaded up with insurance to such an extent that over a prolonged period they cannot keep it in force without undue strain, but that as large a proportion as possible of the whole community should carry an amount of insurance which each can keep in force, without, save in exceptional cases, even borrowing upon it.

U. S. LIFE COMPANIES' RATE OF INTEREST.

Returns of 29 of the oldest life insurance companies of the United States for the year 1915, compiled by the N. Y. Spectator, show that the average rate of interest earned was 4.88 per cent. This is four points above the rate of 1914 and is but three points below the highest figure touched in the past twenty years.

The rate of interest earned by the United States life companies, which for many years had been declining reached its lowest point of 4.58 per cent. in 1902, since which year there has been a steady and appreciable rise, which seems likely to be continued.

FIRE-BUG CONVICTED.

A man named A. Bergeron, of Tellier Street, Tetrauville, has been convicted of arson in the Montreal courts following a lengthy investigation made by Fire Commissioner Latulippe. Five deliberate attempts were made to fire Bergeron's home and on one occasion he drew \$1,100 in insurance.