

LIFE INSURANCE THE BEST INVESTMENT.

Never has been more strikingly emphasised the immense and unique value of life insurance as an investment.

There is not only the fact that the host of speculative buys in real estate and syndicates of one kind and another with which Canada abounds at normal times, have shown themselves in very many cases as either losers of real money or "long shots" in which cash is tied up indefinitely and in an at present entirely unrealisable form. Conservative investments have also been badly affected. Dividends on millions of stock in Canadian industrial undertakings—stock which was held by conservative investors as as an income-producing security—have been passed or reduced during recent months. There is no class of bond or stock security from the highest downwards which has not seen a heavy depreciation as a result of the European conflagration.

But through it all life insurance in a sound old-line company still remains worth a hundred cents on the dollar. Wars may come and go; the very foundations of the earth be moved; but no man who has paid his money to a legal reserve life company need fear that he will not get when due what is promised, if it is an endowment contract, or that it will not be paid in full to his beneficiary in the event of his death.

Before good times come round again, there will be many a family in Canada realising that life insurance was the best investment ever made on its behalf.

The wide-awake life agent will drive this home.

FIRE INSURANCE A TAX ON THE CONSUMER.

It is a striking commentary upon the business judgment of the Canadian citizen that fire insurance is not generally recognized as a tax, distributed, through the buying and selling process, upon the entire community; that every additional fire and every extra fire hazard tends to increase this tax, while every precaution for fire prevention and for the reduction in the number of fire losses tends to lessen the insurance rate. The business man must shift the cost of insuring his goods to the consumer, and, not only is the amount of this tax added, but, as this is part of the cost of doing business, he is entitled to a profit on it as well. Moreover, the amount of rent which the business man has to pay is influenced by the cost of insuring the premises occupied, and this tax too is concealed in the selling price of his goods. This fire insurance tax must also be added to the selling cost at every handling between the original raw material and the finished article.

Returns made to the British Government show a total of over \$180,000,000 owing by foreign countries to British traders. German and Austrian firms owe about \$44,000,000.

"BUSINESS AS USUAL."

If countries engaged in the great struggle can conduct "business as usual," why should not this country, from which the warring nations must draw huge supplies, show a vast increase in its foreign and domestic trade?—*N. Y. Spectator*.

The simple fact is that countries engaged in the great struggle can *not* conduct "business as usual." Present-day conditions in Canada are sufficient evidence of that fact and the parrot-like repetition of a foolish catch-word does not disguise it.

The present struggle is cutting deep economically, as it was bound to do. To try to disguise the fact by the vain repetition of a shibboleth is merely to follow the example of the ostrich. The business man who is doing his country service these days is he who, frankly recognizing present conditions, yet with a steady refusal to fall into panic and an unswerving faith in the future based upon reason and a sound common-sense, plods steadily on, doing the best he can under the circumstances and holding himself ready to take advantage of any favorable change in circumstances. Steady plodding of that kind is not showy. But it is a good deal more useful than the noisy efforts of the Sunshine Club crowd.

GERMANY'S FINANCIAL STRAIN.

Even in time of peace Germany was not a lending country. She has not, therefore, as both France and England have, large annual reserves of savings, which would normally flow to foreign countries, but which are now available for financing the war, says an English authority. She starts with the handicap of being able to borrow less readily from her own people than either France or England, and in addition she will almost certainly have to borrow more. Her expenditure on the war has been conservatively estimated at about £2,000,000 a day. This figure is based upon the estimated number of her troops and the understood cost per man. It is more likely that she is spending more than that she is spending less. She is raising a loan of £250,000,000, and if she gets the whole of this, as is not yet certain, the money will not, at her present rate of expenditure, last till the end of the year. She will then be faced with the necessity of raising a further loan of enormous size. It will be extremely interesting to see whether and, if so, how she will get it. The raising of the present loan has been achieved by methods which cannot be indefinitely repeated. It has been done by floating enormous quantities of inconvertible paper money. That is an expedient commonly resorted to in countries of questionable financial standing, but it has seldom if ever been resorted to with impunity. It means a depreciated currency—Germany's has now depreciated 6 per cent. or more in neutral countries—and a depreciated currency will make it yet harder for Germany to carry on her foreign trade, while it will make it finally impossible—if it ever were possible—for her to borrow from abroad. She will need more money, and at a price she may get it, but the price, especially if the war be a long one, will be very heavy.

The cost of the European war to date is estimated in London at five billion dollars.