

LIFE ASSURANCE IN CANADA

IF evidence were required of the increasing popularity of life assurance among the Canadian people and of its permanent and important position in Canadian business affairs, that evidence is contained in the newly issued Preliminary Report of the Superintendent of Insurance for the Dominion of Canada for the business of 1914.

The development of life assurance in this country has been notable. Public records date from 1875, when the total amount of life assurance in force in Canada was but little over \$85,000,000. It was 1881 before the hundred million mark was passed; in 1902 the half billion level was reached, while by the end of 1912 the billion dollar mark was attained with a substantial margin to spare. That the instincts of home protection and of industrious thrift are deep-seated in the Canadian people is proven by the fact that they have more than doubled their life assurances in the past ten years and have more than trebled them in the past fifteen years. At the end of last year, no fewer than 1,765,492 life policies were in force in Canada for assurances totalling the huge sum of \$1,216,995,432.

Study these figures a moment. What do they mean? Simply that the life assurance companies operating in Canada to-day will distribute over the course of the next few years to policyholders, their widows and fatherless children the enormous sum of nearly one and one-quarter billions of dollars. Can any man conceive the incalculable benefits of philanthropy organized upon so vast a scale? Can he measure the loads such sums will lift from the hearts of widowhood and helpless old age? If so, he can estimate in some degree the value through the years to come of life assurance to the people of the Dominion of Canada.

A striking feature in the Report is the sum paid by Canadians in life assurance premiums, a total of \$41,129,724 representing an increase over the previous year of \$2,488,518. When it is remembered that this huge amount is derived from the savings of scores of thousands of individuals and families, it is at once evident that the Canadian people have faith in life assurance not only as an unrivalled stimulus to systematic thrift, but as a safe and profit-

able method of accumulating sums saved from income.

Turning more particularly to the record of our Canadian companies, singularly impressive is the increase during 1914 in their total assets by \$24,203,879 to \$257,448,374, an increase for the year of more than 10%. Taken in conjunction with the increase in the combined surplus over all liabilities (except capital) by \$3,218,085 to \$34,518,230, such a record affords one more proof of the essential soundness of the basic principles of assurance finance. Even in normal times such increases would call for comment; but achieved, as they were, in the face of world-wide depression, they are a legitimate source of sincere gratification to all friends of Canadian life assurance.

That the Sun Life of Canada occupies a conspicuous place in the field of Canadian assurance is indicated by the fact that it contributed more than one-third of the increase in assets registered by all twenty-six Canadian Companies and that at the end of the past year its assets were nearly one-quarter of the total assets held by these companies.

Though, as is only right, some proportion of the resources of Canadian companies is invested in countries outside of Canada in which a number of these companies operate, by far the greater part of the quarter of a billion dollars of the Assets of our home companies is invested in Canadian real estate, Canadian mortgages and Canadian bonds, debentures and stocks. Entirely aside from the benefits conferred by the payment of death claims and maturing policies, it is therefore not too much to say that the investment of so large a part of the Canadian life companies' funds in individual, corporate and municipal Canadian enterprises has operated as a primary factor in the development of the Dominion of Canada.

All life companies operating in Canada last year met their obligations to policyholders punctually and in full. Payments to policyholders by the Canadian companies totalled no less than \$19,400,983. Of this sum, \$7,252,151 helped carry the burdens of the widows and children of deceased policyholders; the \$3,706,267 paid in matured endowments relieved burdens incidental to advancing age,