

GOVERNMENT OPERATION OF INSURANCE.

It has long been evident that Government control of operation of business, including insurance, can be conducted more efficiently, and economically, when those who are responsible for it, are also interested in its profitable outcome.

The operation of a business by the Government, removes the incentive and the necessity for its economical management, because if the business is run at a loss, it is only necessary to tax the people at large, in order to make good the deficit.

Comptroller Travis, of New York State, recently made an excellent point when he mentioned that an income tax for instance, is the most dangerous of taxes, because it is the most easily levied. Other forms of taxation reach a limit, but to the mind of the average politician the income tax, by increase of rate to meet extravagant expenditures, seems inexhaustible. The Spectator, New York, says:

With no necessity existing for the earning of a net profit from operation, with an easy-going public to call upon for unlimited funds to make good deficits, and with employees receiving much larger pay for nominally similar work (though probably accomplishing less than those employed by private business houses), the lot of the Government official in charge of the operation of a public utility is a happy one.

CANADIAN FIRE RECORD.

Fire at Winnipeg.—On the 2nd instant a disastrous fire broke out on the premises of Thos. Kelley & Sons (contractors) warehouse, entailing a loss of about \$100,000.

Fire at Forest, Ont.—A frame building at the rear of Pressey's Market was destroyed on the 2nd instant. Fire walls prevented the spread of the fire. Loss about \$1,000.

Fire at Kingston, Ont.—On April 30th, a fire broke out in the loom department of the Kingston Hosiery Mill, causing a slight damage, due to the prompt use of the sprinkling system.

Fire at Erindale, Ont.—On the 5th instant, a lighted match carelessly thrown into a coal oil drip tank in Barker's general store, caused a blaze which practically wiped out the whole business section of the village. The latter is absolutely without fire equipment. The following buildings were destroyed: J. M. Barker's store, and residence, Erindale Hotel stables and sheds and the Anglican Parish Hall. Total loss estimated at \$30,000.

Fire near Bowmanville, Ont.—On the 5th instant the farm buildings on the Crawford farm, two miles from Bowmanville, were struck by lightning, and completely destroyed, with contents, including horses and cattle. Loss about \$6,000, with \$3,000 insurance.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE IN CANADA, 1918.

Notwithstanding the inroads made by the Government in this branch of insurance, the growth of this department of casualty underwriting is indicated by the substantial increase in premiums for 1918. Last year the premiums reached \$2,885,542, an advance of \$438,394 upon the 1917 record of \$2,447,168. The losses incurred for 1918 amounted to \$1,686,833, figuring a loss ratio of 58.45 per cent. compared with a loss ratio of 60.13 per cent. in 1917 and 59.32 per cent. in 1916. There are constantly new problems being presented to underwriters, and it may not be fully appreciated in some instances that employers' liability insurance is a most hazardous business, and can only be successfully conducted by men with extensive experience.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE.

The volume of last year's accident business shows very fair expansion, and a favourable experience. The premiums received for 1918 amounting to \$1,795,176, compare with \$1,643,901 for 1917. The losses incurred for 1918 total \$711,956, figuring a very favourable loss ratio of slightly under 40 per cent., following a most favourable experience in 1917.

The premiums received in the combined Personal, Accident and Sickness insurance amounted to \$915,373, with losses incurred of \$591,177.

AUTO SPEEDERS TO BE SEVERELY SENTENCED.

Autoists who insist on breaking speed laws had better beware hereafter, as heavier sentences are to be imposed.

Judge Leet in the Police Court, Montreal, made this situation clear.

"Sentences in the past," said His Lordship, "have not been sufficient apparently to put an end to speeding in the city, and it is therefore my intention to be more severe this year than formerly."

He added that the law required that there shall be entered on each certificate of registration of license judgments for infraction of the law. In the past this had been somewhat neglected, and his intention was to enforce this provision, and require everyone who is summoned for infringement of the law to produce his certificate for the purpose of having the judgment endorsed on it.

There were two cases before the court this week, and it was proved that each of the parties had driven at 30 miles an hour and over. Each was fined \$20 and costs, and ordered to produce his certificate for endorsement within five days, otherwise an additional fine of \$10 would be imposed.

The speed limit in the city is 14 miles an hour. In the country it is 25 miles an hour.