

FIRE PREMIUMS AND TAXATION IN MONTREAL, 1916.

THE CHRONICLE publishes this week on page 449 its annual statement showing (1) the amount of fire insurance premiums upon risks in the city received by the fire companies doing business in Montreal in 1916 and 1915, and (2) the details of the taxation levied in 1916 upon the fire companies by the City. The total premiums received last year by the fire companies in Montreal were \$3,057,281, compared with \$2,881,955 in 1915, \$3,101,784 in 1914 (the highest figure yet reached), \$2,934,551 in 1913 and \$2,645,684 in 1912. Thus the greater part of the sharp decline in Montreal premiums experienced in 1915, as a result of the depressed conditions of general business throughout that year, was recovered during 1916, last year's premiums from the Metropolitan City showing an increase of \$175,000 over 1915, and running to within \$45,000 of 1914's record figures. Industrial activity, and the high prices of practically all products, necessitating an insurance cover considerably enlarged above the average, are probably the main factors in this increase. General building operations in the City last year were again restricted, and it has previously been pointed out that while there are a considerable number of munition plants in the Montreal district, most of these are not within the actual bounds of the City itself, and accordingly do not figure in the present compilation.

BASIS OF THE TAXATION.

The basis of the tax upon premiums (fixed by the Legislature in 1911) is a one per cent. straight tax upon the premiums with a minimum tax of \$200. In recent years the City has made several attempts to obtain authority to double up this entirely indefensible tax, but so far happily without result. The companies get nothing in return for this tax, the only excuse for which is that it is easily collectable. The pretence has sometimes been put forward that the companies get value received in the shape of the City salvage department, but we have never heard that this department was more energetic at a fire on premises insured by the regularly licensed companies than at one where the property was covered by some or other of the multitude of unlicensed concerns, which do a flourishing business in Montreal without paying a cent in taxation to the City or any other authority.

Including the tax towards the upkeep of the Fire Commissioners' office, the City's special taxation upon the fire companies amounted last year to \$39,522 compared with \$38,068 in 1915.

Eight companies did a business in Montreal last year involving premiums of \$100,000 and upwards, compared with seven in the previous year. They were in the order given:—Royal, Guardian, Phoenix of London, North British, Liverpool and London and Globe, Mount Royal, Western and Commercial Union.

Messrs. Hyndman & Co., Ltd., the well-known general agents of Charlottetown, P.E.I., have issued an attractively designed booklet of testimonials from satisfied clients. The firm represents a considerable number of the leading companies in the Garden Province and transacts an extensive business in marine, life and fire insurance, etc.

AETNA LIFE'S EXPERIENCE WITH CANADIAN WAR RISKS.

Up to March 1 the Aetna Life had placed insurance on 4,312 Canadian soldiers, for small amounts, totalling \$3,951,350. There have been 234 death claims, and the Aetna Life has had to pay out \$224,750. In addition, fifty-three men have been reported missing; the insurance on them amounts to \$42,900.

Nearly all the deaths on which the Company paid claims resulted from wounds inflicted in actual battle, only a small proportion of the fatalities being caused by disease or other conditions. In most cases, the soldiers have been insured on the group plan.

ROYAL'S NEW ACQUISITION.

The Royal Insurance Company has purchased control of the Newark Fire Insurance Company of Newark, N.J. This Company, which is reported as having very fine business connections in its home state and Pennsylvania, capable of considerable development, will continue to be operated as a separate entity.

The steady upward trend of workmen's compensation loss ratios is causing grave concern to company managers in New York. Five years' business shows an aggregate earned premium of \$100,026,000 for the companies reporting to the New York Insurance Department and the loss ratio, including loss expense, has risen from 46.46 per cent. in 1912 to 74.50 per cent. in 1916, showing an average loss ratio for the five years of 65.12 per cent.

ESTABLISHED 1873.

Standard Bank of CANADA

Statement of Affairs, Condensed from
Government Statement 31st January, 1917

RESOURCES

Cash on Hand	\$10,762,524.47
Due by Banks	2,574,239.34
Government and Other Bonds	7,244,943.58
Loans on Call and Short Date	1,656,956.71
Time Loans and Discounts	36,064,884.76
Deposit with Govt. for Circulation	150,000.00
Bank Premises (freehold)	1,229,935.38
Acceptances under Letters of Credit	
per Contra	58,645.84
Other Assets	108,144.91
	\$59,850,274.99

LIABILITIES

Capital Stock	\$ 3,333,242.14
Reserve Fund and Undivided Profits	4,486,835.77
Notes in Circulation	4,546,513.00
Deposits	46,292,564.57
Due to Other Banks	1,026,074.06
Dividend Payable 1st February, 1917	106,399.61
Acceptances per Contra	58,645.84
	\$59,850,274.99