

AFTER THE WAR

The need of thorough preparation on the part of the federal and provincial governments for after-war conditions is admitted. While some action has been taken, Canada and its affairs are so disturbed by politicians and their machines, that our measure of preparation is seriously short. Germany has already a plan whereby it hopes to break competition. The idea is that the government should become a large trust and have absolute control of the country's exports. In this manner Germany will try to undersell and crush individual competitive merchants of other nations. If Canada wishes to retain its trade after the war we will have to plan carefully now.

In an instructive address at Winnipeg last week, Professor Swanson, of the University of Saskatchewan, pointed out that the United Kingdom has hammered out various economic instruments which have been used with telling effect since the outbreak of war. It is safe to assert that they will not be thrown aside unused when peace comes. Great Britain has taken entire control of the export and import business of the nation, and directs the flow of goods to suit her own needs and effect her own objects. Before the war the British tobacco interests virtually controlled the export prices of tobacco in Virginia and other tobacco-growing States. It was even then realized what a tremendous power a foreign combination might gain over the prices of domestic products. The converse of this was just as true. Brazil, by means of its valorization scheme, was able to determine the price of coffee in Europe and America; and at this time the government of Yucatan is mulching the farmers of the United States and Canada of millions of dollars, through its control of sisal hemp. If after the war, as has been foreshadowed, Germany and other European countries shall give to purchasing trusts the sole right to import cotton, copper, rubber and the many other commodities essential as raw materials to their industry, it can be predicted that foreign nations will be in a strong position to control the prices of many American products.

As Professor Swanson truly said, the great industries of the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria and France, have been keyed up to the point of highest efficiency;

they have been organized to achieve national ends and ambitions as never before. Peace will inevitably be but the forerunner of an economic war for supremacy in the neutral markets of the world. Are we doing our proper share of preparation to meet these conditions?

UNIFORM INSURANCE LAWS

The plea of Mr. A. E. Fisher, insurance superintendent of Saskatchewan, for the standardization of provincial insurance laws, is worthy of serious support. The Western insurance departments have done much to obtain uniformity of laws in their section of the country. Comparatively little practical help appears to have been given to their advances for more widespread uniformity, except perhaps in one or two of the eastern provinces. As Mr. Fisher pointed out in his address at the life underwriters' convention at Winnipeg last week, it would be a great convenience to policyholders, and, in the case of life insurance, to executors, beneficiaries, and other persons interested, if a common procedure were adopted by as many provinces as possible, so that a knowledge of the insurance law of one province would afford an acquaintance with the local laws throughout the greater part, if not the whole, of the Dominion. "There is no one," he said, "but will admit the desirability of such a condition of affairs, and, speaking from the standpoint of Saskatchewan in particular, and of the West in general, there seems to be every willingness to support such a movement in so far as local conditions may warrant it."

Mr. Fisher did not overlook the fact that, while the eastern provinces are more or less settled in their ways, the West is in a state of development and consequently conditions are changing. He suggested that that was the one point which might cause delay in securing absolute uniformity of laws from the Pacific to the Atlantic. While there is something in that contention, it should be comparatively easy to obtain a large measure of uniformity in our provincial insurance laws. The western insurance superintendents have made an excellent beginning and it is to be hoped that the superintendents of all the provinces will meet in the near future to discuss this important subject.

GREAT-WEST LIFE MEN HAVE CONVENTION

The Hundred Thousand Club of the Great-West Life Assurance Company of Winnipeg held its annual convention in that city from August 21st to 25th. About seventy-five members were present at the opening session on Tuesday morning where they were welcomed by the president of the company, Mr. A. Macdonald, and by the vice-president, Mr. R. T. Riley. Mr. Macdonald mentioned the remarkable fact that in ten weeks prior to the convention \$10,000,000 of insurance had been secured by the agents of the company. He also gave interesting reminiscences of the early days of the company with which he has been connected since its inception and drew particular attention to the solid foundation which had been laid by the founders of the company, especially the late managing director, Mr. J. H. Brock. The new president for the 1917 club year was then installed in his chair of office. Mr. A. H. Aronovitch, the new president, is a Winnipeg man and replaces Mr. P. Moreau from the province of Quebec, who was the president last year. He gave interesting predictions as to the business for next year, and urged the adoption of a slogan, "One hundred members for 1918." He was followed by Dr. H. H. Chown, the medical director of the company, who gave interesting information regarding the selection of risks. Addresses by Mr. C. A. Butler, man-

ager of the company at Montreal, on the "Appeal of the Great-West Life," and by Mr. J. A. Johnson, manager at Vancouver, on "Statistics," completed the day's session, and the evening was occupied by a dinner at the Fort Garry Hotel, at which many interesting speeches were given by the vice-presidents of the club from the various provinces.

The second session was addressed by Mr. W. McQuaker, the treasurer of the company, who presented to the club the investment methods of the company and gave a most interesting analysis of them. This was followed by an address, "Since we last met," given by Mr. C. C. Ferguson, the general manager of the company. Mr. Ferguson's remarks showed the growth of the company along various lines since the date of the last convention. The figures quoted and the explanations given were most valuable from the point of view of the agents, and many valuable pointers were secured. The convention then adjourned to take part in the proceedings of the Dominion Life Underwriters' convention meeting in Winnipeg last week.

The damage to the soil through forest fires in Canada is a severe annual burden upon the country. The United States estimates that forest fires annually do half a billion dollars injury to soil fertility.