

# SUNSHINE

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## The Managing-Director's Annual Message to the Agency Staff.

Greetings, cordial and sincere, to friends at home and abroad! May the coming Yule time be happy and gay, and be followed by the sweet promise of success and contentment in the home of every worker for the Sun Life of Canada, be his where it may!

The year has been quite an eventful one. Regarding new business, we had decided to adopt the military step of marking time and making measured progress. Retrenchment in amount of new business was, as you perhaps know, removed upon early in the year. And yet the unsettled state of public opinion should, perhaps, have been foreseen by us as likely of itself to effect the contraction desired. The relaxation will certainly accomplish in large part the end sought by the executive, viz., a reduction in the general cost of the Company's business. I am informed that a reduction of over four points had been achieved by October.

A very noticeable advance in new business was immediately the result of the investigation of the Company by the Royal Commission became known. The field staff and the public too responded most heartily to the commendation bestowed on the Company by one of the Commissioners; the intake of new business for the month of November showing a handsome increase. I think we shall close the year about abreast of the figures for 1904.

But the great event of the year was undoubtedly the visit of the Royal Commission. Without doubt some of the companies first examined had been handled with considerable severity, that showed a decided disposition to accentuate and magnify every irregularity disclosed in evidence. And seeing that we had no personal acquaintance with members of the Commission, and being neither millionaires, great commoners, nor of the Lords temporal or spiritual, we were naturally expected to be handled without gloves; and in that we were not altogether disappointed. Conscious as we were of strictest

integrity in the administration of the Company, we yet could not regard the coming ordeal unperturbed, in fact could ill-repress the feelings naturally suggested by the well-known stanza—

"I know you lawyers can with ease  
Twist words and meanings as you please."

Nor did Fletcher's characterization improve matters where he says—

"A lawyer that entangles all men's honesties  
And lives like a spider in a cobweb, lurking  
And catching at all flies that pass his pitfalls."

Well, we had our turn on the gridiron and the spit, for the better part of six days, counsel being in good fettle and bent on unearthing maladministration if at all possible; and yet we held our own manfully, and emerged finally from the hot ordeal like the three Hebrews of historic fame, "On whose bodies the fire had no power nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed nor the smell of fire had passed on them."

While the result of the investigation seemed to convince the Commission as a whole of the unblemished character of the Sun Life administration, it is to Commissioner Kent that our thanks are especially due for expressing his appreciation in language so highly eulogistic. And it is but right to Mr. Kent that I should say that he was under no obligation whatever to the Sun Life, nor to any member of its staff. Although living in the same city we were strangers to each other, and he is not assured in this Company. The following I copy from the stenographic report of the Royal Commission:

"It seems to me that in the conduct of the Sun Life business there is nothing to be desired as far as the present generation is concerned. If you were immortal I would say nothing more about it (policyholders' voting), but in the course of time somebody else will assume the management of the Sun Life. If by sound judgment, hard work and just discrimination you have put the Sun Life on the