

BRITISH AMERICA ASSURANCE COMPANY.

The British America Assurance Company of Toronto, under Mr. W. B. Meikle's able management, is able to produce this year an annual report of an exceptionally satisfactory character. Both the opening and the closing months of the year were favorable to the Company, the summer months being disappointing, particularly in the United States where business conditions were unsettled. With a large expansion in the business, profits reach a new high level in the long history of this old-established Company, amounting to \$224,243, as against \$146,578 in 1912. The only year when the Company was able to get anywhere near the figures recorded for 1913 was in 1909, when profits amounted to \$214,018. The New York city business was particularly profitable while the loss ratio on the Pacific Coast was the lowest in any field for the year.

Fire premiums, less re-insurances, amounted to \$1,937,637, showing the very substantial increase of \$162,154 over 1912. Losses for the year, after deducting recoveries under reinsurances were \$1,029,578, being 53.14 per cent. of the premiums. This compares with a loss ratio of 54.96 per cent. in 1912.

As a result of the year's operations, the Company paid two dividends of 3½ per cent. on the fixed preference stock, wrote off accounts of \$6,295 and was then able to carry forward a balance of \$691,529, an increase of over \$200,000 on the balance carried forward the previous year. While nothing can be anticipated with an approach to certainty regarding the results of fire insurance business, there are many who will hope that the exceedingly good results achieved by this fine old company last year, will be followed in due course by further favorable periods.

The total assets of the Company at December 31, amounted to \$2,344,464, an increase of nearly \$200,000 upon the figures reported a year ago. Liabilities for unearned premiums, etc., amount to \$1,247,279, leaving the largely increased surplus to policyholders of \$1,097,185.

UNITED STATES LIFE'S REPORT.

While dating its establishment as far back as 1850, the United State Life Insurance Company of New York has never joined in the race for size, and in consequence the close of sixty-four years of activity finds it still with assets which in amount are comparatively modest. However, conservatism of management in life insurance is of greater importance than size *per se*, and in that matter the United States Life's record is peculiarly favorable and satisfactory. At December 31, 1913, the Company had assets of \$8,020,557, invested in high grade securities, and after making provision on a strict basis for all liabilities, there is a surplus represented by guarantee capital and unassigned funds of \$528,503. The Company states its aim as being to give its policyholders as nearly perfect service as possible. It is an admirable object for a life company and none the worse for being steadily pursued without fuss and fathers.

The Merchants Casualty Company has been licensed to transact accident and sickness business in Canada, excluding employers' liability. Mr. L. M. Fingard, of Winnipeg, is chief agent.

REGARDING PROOF OF AGE.

Policy No. 100,000 was issued on 6th December, 1913, and since that date we have already had about 75 cases of change of age, including a dozen cases of change of age on policies issued since that date. It would certainly appear that, in these latter cases, proof of age could have been obtained with the application, and the subsequent change would therefore have been unnecessary. It is very annoying to the assured, especially after paying premiums for a number of years, to find that he is one or more years older than the age given at date of issue of policy, and that he must pay a certain lump sum to cover arrears in addition to paying a higher premium thereafter.

There does not appear to be much force in the argument that many applications would not be obtainable if the applicant were asked to obtain proof of age at the time of signing the application. We might suggest that the application be first obtained; that before sending the application to Head Office, the age question be tactfully explained to the applicant by pointing out the fact that proof must be obtained some time in every Company, and that it may be more easily obtained now by the applicant than years later by someone else. Further, the Insurance Act provides that, in case of understatement of the age, the amount payable in case of claim will be such proportion of the amount which would be payable at the correct age, as the premium at the age at which the policy was written bears to the premium at the true age. For example, suppose the premiums at ages 25 and 26 are \$29.80 and \$30.40 respectively; that the policy was originally issued at age 25 for \$1,000 but that proof of age shows the correct age to have been 26; then, the amount payable as a claim would be 2980/3040 of the amount which would have been obtainable if the policy had been originally issued for \$1,000 at age 26. That is, instead of receiving \$1,000 in case of a death claim, the beneficiary would receive only \$980.26.

The fact that one or two of our agents send proof of age with practically every application shows that it can be done, and we would earnestly request every agent to do his utmost to obtain proof of age with the application. An advertisement for a patent medicine used to read, "A fair trial will convince you," and we believe the same statement will prove true in this proof of age question.—*Mutual Life of Canada's Agents' Bulletin*.

It is stated by cable that the Yorkshire Insurance Company has made an offer to purchase the Guarantee Society, Ltd., with the intention of continuing it separately. The Guarantee Society, established in 1840, has a capital of £100,000 fully paid up and aggregate funds of £220,000.

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In point of fact the prospect before the policyholders of the Canada Life is to-day quite cloudless, as the securities are valued throughout on a most conservative basis, the sensible amortisation system being applied to all bonds and debentures, while in the case of stocks owned the basis of valuation was their depreciated market price on December 31 last.—*London Insurance Observer*.