Insurance Under Returned Soldiers Insurance Act

Under the "Returned Soldiers Insurance Act" some 1015 applications for life insurance have been received at Ottawa up to December 1st, for $3,282,000 insurance. All applications have been received since Sept. 1st.

Policies are issued for a minimum of $500 and for multiples thereof, not exceeding $5,000. That a large number are taking full advantage of the insurance offered is evident, when it is stated that an average unit of the policies held would be $3,600. Practically all the officers and many privates take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the act. The scale of premiums is below that offered by the insurance companies and slightly higher than that offered to civil servants. The most popular forms of policies are the "all life" and the "20-year pay life" policies.

Premiums are payable monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or yearly. As no advantage is given for the longer period payments, the great majority of the policyholders have chosen the monthly payment plan. No woman has yet taken advantage of the plan although the widow of a soldier who died after his discharge or a widowed mother are entitled to avail themselves of it. So far few soldiers who only served in Canada have taken insurance under the act, the name of the act, "The Returned Soldiers' Insurance Act," having probably made them think mistakenly that they could not qualify. No applications have been received from any Frenchman, Italian or American who was resident in Canada before the war and who served in one of the allied armies, although such veterans, too, are eligible. Nurses are eligible, and W. A. A. C's, but V. A. C's, not having been subject to military discipline, would not be eligible. Insurance men have co-operated in the work, advising many men who could not qualify for their companies of the federal plan.

Ontario has furnished the largest proportion of the policyholders. Up to two weeks ago, the policyholders were distributed among the provinces as follows: Prince Edward Island, none; Nova Scotia, twenty risks for $61,000 insurance; New Brunswick, sixteen risks for $63,000; Quebec, 103 risks for $361,500; Ontario, 429 risks for $1,-375,500; Manitoba, 84 risks for $254,000; Alberta, 60 risks for $196,000; Saskatchewan, 68 risks for $242,500; British Columbia, 94 risks for $321,-500; and the Yukon, one risk for $5,000. No claims have been paid as yet.

Before the opening of parliament next month the government will consider the adding of unemployment insurance to the business it has already established in returned soldiers' insurance, and in civil service insurance. As considerable unemployment is expected through the winter, the minister of labor may urge that unemployment insurance, operated as complementary to the federal system of labor bureaus, would be practical politics.