LIFE INSURANCE AND THE WAR LOAN.

The present War Loan campaign, in which life insurance men are rendering valuable services, is of great practical interest, in more ways than one, to the whole life insurance fraternity. The country is being educated in these strenuous days of effort, as it has never been educated before, in the duty of national service by means of thrift—the setting free by the individual for his country's use, of goods and services which he would otherwise claim for himself. Special efforts in this direction are being made to reach the rank and file of folk, who inevitably, under normal circumstances, form the great majority of the *clientele* of the life insurance companies. It is reasonable to anticipate that in many cases the present response to a patriotic appeal will have a lasting effect, and that, as Lord Shaughnessy remarked in his admirable address the other day, "the $50 or $100 invested in these bonds will encourage further additions when circumstances permit. The foundation having been established, there will be the incentive to build upon it in a rational and sensible way."

For the great majority, there is no better way of steady continuation of the practise of thrift than through life insurance, either to provide for dependents or for one's own old age. Present circumstances emphasize a point which in more normal times is apt to be overlooked, that thrift itself is a civic virtue of no mean kind, and that provision for dependents or for one's own old age is practical patriotism of a high type. It is a strength to any country, whether in war times or in peace times, that a large proportion of its citizens should be thus providing against eventualities by means of life insurance.

PATRIOTIC PREMIUMS.

At this time also, perhaps, the point needs to be borne in mind that through the payment of life insurance premiums, the same patriotic end is accomplished as by the purchase of War Bonds. The man who finds that payment of his life insurance premiums is all that he can do beyond meeting the present high cost of living, is doing his "bit" in the payment of those premiums promptly and regularly just as much as the millionaire, who can put himself down for $100,000 War Bonds. By relinquishing for the time being his claim upon goods and services, so that they become available for the purposes of the country, the insured achieves the primary object of war-time thrift, while the purpose of lending money to the Government is also in fact accomplished, since the life insurance companies are investing in Goverment bonds, the premiums which they collect. It follows that the taking out of additional life insurance at the present time is an essentially patriotic action, since it results in further restriction of personal expenditures and a freeing for national purposes of goods and services that would otherwise be claimed for personal use.

It seems likely that in the future life insurance agents will benefit considerably from the breaking-up of fallow ground by the present campaigns for patriotic thrift. The best incentive to thrift is the practise of it for a little while, and when the existing necessity has passed, probably life insurance agents will continue to discover its lasting effects.

FIRE AGENTS AND RATES.

It is the primary duty of a fire insurance agent to inform himself regarding the why and wherefore of rates in his locality, in order that he may not only render a maximum of service to his clientele, but that he may be intelligently loyal both to the company which he represents, and to the honorable calling which he practises.

When an agent's clients complain that rates on their property are too high, unjust, or discriminatory, he cheapens his influence in passively acquiescing by excusing himself from responsibility for rates, or by pleading that they are determined by others and forced upon him and he is simply compelled to get them. He knows, or ought to know, that these rates are predicated upon a justifiable basis and a fair estimate of local conditions and of individual hazards.

The agent ought to meet such complaints energetically at the start, and end them by explaining the why and the wherefore. If he does not know, he should hasten to inform himself. He should not consent to being considered as representing a scheme of extortion, when he is really engaged in an honorable business of which he should be proud.

If a rate is not reasonable, he should surely use his active influence to make it right; but the business has suffered, and is suffering, from at least some weak-kneed representatives, who do not defend their vocation. An agent who gets into the habit of sympathizing with unreasonable and unjust criticisms of fire insurance, contributes to the discredit of his calling—discredits himself.

GOVERNMENT'S APPRECIATION OF LIFE AGENTS.

While in Canada, life insurance agents are rendering invaluable services to their country, through their active participation in the Victory Loan campaign, in the United States, life agents have been called upon to volunteer their time and talents in the explanation to soldiers and sailors of the provisions of the Government insurance scheme, which has just been got under weigh. Some agents are going to France for this purpose; others to the training camps. This appeal by the United States Government constitutes a notable recognition of the value of the services rendered by life insurance agents. Although war insurance is being given to American soldiers and sailors on remarkably attractive terms, it is found that it will not sell itself, any more than ordinary life insurance will sell itself. The persuasion of the agent is necessary in both cases. These facts form one more proof that life insurance is seldom bought, but always sold, and that if the agent be eliminated from the field by any process whatever, the public will be denied the benefits of life insurance. Hence it follows that no state or governmental insurance scheme can hope to succeed, unless agents are employed to solicit business.,

For the six months of the fiscal year ended September 30th, Canadian imports were $549,925,223 against $390,965,243 in the corresponding six months of 1916. Exports of domestic products were $767,091,657 compared with $536,722,671.