

THE OCEAN ACCIDENT AND GUARANTEE CORPORATION.

Again the Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation, Limited, a notable member of the group of prominent British insurance companies devoting themselves mainly to casualty business, records a steady increase both in the extent of its organisation and in its wealth and power. The figures of the newly-published accounts are the best that the Corporation has ever produced, and considering that during five months of the year the European war was in progress, this is an achievement of which those connected with the Corporation may well be proud. At the recent annual meeting the Chairman (Mr. E. Roger Owen), mentioned that in his judgment the hard time was yet before them and that it will require great care and energy to be able to produce an equally good account next year. That both the necessary care and energy will be forthcoming from the skilful administration guiding the Company's affairs, there is every reason to believe.

THE YEAR'S BUSINESS.

During 1914, the total net premium income from all departments was advanced by the substantial amount of \$246,000, so that it reached \$10,990,445. This premium income has shown very strong growth particularly since the Ocean became attached, some four years ago, to the Commercial Union Assurance Company—an advance of some \$2,700,000 having been made during that period. The excellent quality of the business acquired may be judged from the claim record. Claims paid and provided for absorb \$5,488,155, a decrease of over \$200,000 in comparison with 1913, and giving a proportion of 49.93 per cent. of the premium income, which compares with 53.08 p.c. in 1913. The experience in regard to expenses was likewise favorable. The total expenditure on this account was \$3,946,800 equal to 35.90 per cent. of premium income against 36.35 per cent. in the previous year. While the percentage decrease is not large, on so extensive a business as that transacted by the Ocean, this apparently small decrease represents actually a considerable annual saving—the fruit of efficient management.

A STRONG POSITION.

The reserve against unearned premiums is increased from \$3,857,910 to \$4,060,105—the latter amount representing an enhanced proportion of the premium income. From the underwriting and investment balance, \$233,430 has been transferred to the investment reserve and general contingency fund, thereby raised to \$600,000. Apart from this and the provision for outstanding claims, the funds, in addition to the paid-up capital of \$861,540, are well in excess of \$10,000,000. The assets set out in the balance sheet total \$16,473,146, an increase of over \$1,600,000 upon last year's total of \$14,829,523, the investments being in the highest class of securities.

The Ocean has now been operating in the Canadian field twenty years, and under the direction of Mr. Charles H. Neely, of Toronto, general manager for Canada and Newfoundland, its interests are efficiently administered. In view of the very strong and favorable position which the Corporation occupies, it is to be anticipated that its Canadian interests will continue to develop on progressive lines.

SOMETHING LIKE A LAPSE RATIO.

Our estimable friend, the Independent Order of Foresters, again appears in the front rank—facing the wrong way. It managed to issue in Canada last year 8,311 new certificates for \$7,076,539. At the same time, its Canadian lapses amounted to \$15,281,471—more than double its Canadian new business. In fact the Order's Canadian lapses exceeded its entire new business for the year—Canadian and foreign—by \$45,527.

Good old I.O.F.! Keep up the good work.

DECREASE IN EXPENSE RATE.

Statistics of the expenses of twenty-five of the older life insurance companies of the United States whose business is confined to ordinary risks only, as distinguished from industrial, and compiled by the New York Spectator, show a ratio last year of 0.72 per cent. of mean insurance in force. In 1903, two years prior to the legislative investigation in New York, the average expense ratio on mean insurance in force was at the high mark of 1.03 per cent. Judging from the experience of the past five years, says the Spectator, it seems certain that a standard has been established from which there will be but slight deviations for many years to come, although a few individual companies may possibly go lower.

It is pointed out that if the high ratio of 1.03 per cent. had been effective last year, the expenses would have been greater than they were by over \$34,600,000 which sum will now go far towards reducing the cost of the insurance furnished.

A JUSTIFIED PROTEST.

To the Editor of THE CHRONICLE:—

Sir—Surely I am not alone in thinking this "eye witness" stuff at the present time is nothing short of a desecration.

Our men at the front are performing a sacred duty; not taking part in a sporting event that needs to be written up.

Who wants it? Certainly not our soldiers. Nothing could be more abhorrent to them. And as for their relatives—those already bereaved might well be spared the harrowing details. That a husband, a son or a brother has been "killed in action" is sufficient. No greater kindness or respect could be shown those who mourn than to leave them alone with their grief. Those still worn with anxiety have the added dread that a possible tragedy may be turned into melodrama.

Let us remember the fate of Dewey and of Hobson and stop it.

Yours truly,

THE FATHER OF AN OFFICER.

Montreal, May 5.

The legislature of Nova Scotia has passed an act licensing insurance agents in that province and providing a penalty for misrepresentation.

Mr. Alfred Hurrell, well known to Canadian life insurance executives in his capacity as attorney of the Association of Life Insurance Presidents, has resigned from that office to become Associate General Solicitor of the Prudential of America.