

GROUP INSURANCE NOW WRITTEN IN CANADA

It is well known to insurance officials, who are familiar with the Insurance Act, that there is no obstacle therein to prohibit any life company, licensed to operate in Canada, from writing Group Insurance, now so freely written in the United States.

It is to be noted, however, that the Act provides that premium rates applicable to insurance policies on the group plan shall also be available, to all ordinary individuals outside the "group" seeking similar protection. Notwithstanding these facts, life companies operating in Canada, have not been until quite recently, writing "Group Insurance." While no doubt the field is a wide one for this form of insurance, the companies generally have been writing business so freely through the ordinary channels, that otherwise, no doubt, group insurance would have had greater prominence before this by many companies.

PUBLIC OWNERSHIP HAS NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL

It is a most interesting phase of the situation that Australians, while recognizing the question of efficiency in the management of public enterprises as important, evidently believe that there is a much more serious side to the matter. This is found in the restrictions upon private activity entailed by public enterprise. Experience all over the world has shown that government activity is never very enterprising or if it is that mistakes and losses are greatly multiplied. It is easy enough to "take over" businesses that have been started and carried to a fair degree of development, and then the public authorities may "run" them along previously established lines with a fair degree of success. It is quite another thing to block out new work and develop new opportunities. By failing to perform the latter function with success the general scope of the individual is greatly narrowed. He is not only excluded from the occupations or businesses which the State has taken over, but he is also kept from access to new lines of operation which under private enterprise would have been opened to him. Many Australians blame the excessive extension of public ownership and control for the fact that the immense resources of their country have received only a very limited development. They want to see natural resources opened up, the country populated, and business diversified. There is a growing feeling that to get these results the individual will have to be given a larger degree of freedom than in the past. While maintaining over him full and thorough supervision and control, the State they think, will have to grant him much more freedom of action and larger returns for productive enterprise and ingenuity. This is

closely in line with the conclusions arrived at elsewhere. Australia's practical experience tends to confirm the opinions that have been formed through discussion in other countries. H.P.W.

MRS. O'LEARY'S BLUNDER

Something more than a generation ago, one Mrs. O'Leary invaded her stable, or outhouse, to milk her cow. As it was dark, the old lady took a lamp. During the milking process the cow, either in a frolicsome mood or to switch an overzealous fly away, frisked her tail. That was all right enough, especially coming from a cow. The cow was not expected to know that her tail was to be kept at rest even though a lamp was located in its immediate vicinity. Mrs. O'Leary was the one to have known. She didn't or else she didn't care, as the sequel showed. The switch of the tail upset the lamp, and the lamp, as lamps will, upset. The kerosene was poured out, ignition followed, the stable caught quickly from the flames, the flames spread and for several days the great city of Chicago paid a mighty price for milking one cow. And at that, it is by no means certain that even the milk was saved. Certainly the cow was lost and all of Mrs. O'Leary's possessions and the greater part of Chicago.

The incident may have pointed a moral for many. It may have taught thousands that fire is a dreadful enemy, once you give it a chance; also that it doesn't get very far unless you really make the invitation very urgent. The Chicago fire should never have occurred. But for Mrs. O'Leary's carelessness it would not. Yet every day there are Mrs. O'Learys doing just such foolish things. And Mr. O'Leary, too, for that matter. Men are as thoughtless as women in such matters. All, both sexes, young and old, should keep the O'Leary tragedy in memory and profit from the lesson it will never fail to teach.

ASSOCIATION OF LIFE INSURANCE PRESIDENTS.

The international aspect of the program for the Thirteenth Annual Convention of the Association of Life Insurance Presidents, at the Hotel Astor, New York, on December fourth and fifth, is emphasized by the announcement that Sir Henry Drayton, the new Canadian Minister of Finance, has accepted an invitation to be present and make an address. His topic will be in harmony with the general theme of the Convention which will deal with various post-war problems. He probably will speak along the line of "Some Canadian Reconstruction Problems". As is customary, the executives of all of the Canadian life insurance companies have been invited to be present at the meeting and, from the acceptances already received, it is evident that Canada will be well represented.