

**THE OCTOBER FIRE LOSS.**

Losses by fire in the United States and Canada during October, as compiled from the records of the New York Journal of Commerce, reached a total of \$26,384,450, as compared with \$17,701,375 in October last year and \$14,465,850 for the same month in 1915. The unusually heavy October loss, added to the already serious fire record thus far this year brings the total up to \$221,002,315 for the first ten months of 1917, as compared with \$189,481,220 for the same months in 1916 and \$140,754,250 in 1915. The losses of October this year were increased by the large grain storehouse fire in Brooklyn involving \$2,000,000 and the railroad dock fire at Baltimore involving \$3,500,000, but aside from these there was an unusual number of fires resulting in losses anywhere between \$200,000 and \$750,000. The following table gives a comparison of the losses by months for the first ten months of this year with those of 1916:—

	1916.	1917.
January.....	\$21,423,350	\$36,431,770
February.....	24,770,770	29,587,660
March.....	38,680,250	17,523,000
April.....	12,681,050	18,597,225
May.....	15,973,500	24,968,800
June.....	12,247,500	15,513,270
July.....	23,013,800	16,143,050
August.....	10,745,000	21,751,100
September.....	12,244,625	14,101,450
October.....	17,701,375	26,384,450
Total 10 months.....	\$189,481,220	\$221,002,315
November.....	19,898,450	.....
December.....	22,063,325	.....
Total for year.....	\$231,442,995	.....

Fire underwriters, remarks the Journal of Commerce, are looking forward with some uneasiness to their annual statements for the year 1917, as between the abnormally heavy fire losses and the serious drop in security values, many will show depleted surpluses.

**INCREASED FIRE INSURANCE NECESSARY.**

The extent to which increased fire insurance is necessary as a result of the rise in the cost of materials, is shown by the Queen Insurance Company of America in a table of increased costs of various materials used in building. Masonry work has gone up 30%; stone work 25%; plastering 25%; marble and tiling 20%; iron work 40%; plumbing 40%; carpenter work 25%; roofing and metal work 30%; painting 30%; electrical work 25%; and so on down through the entire list of costs incidental to building. Practically every material has advanced by at least 25%, and some by as high as 40%. Replacement cost has advanced accordingly, and the insurance that was adequate in pre-war times is now inadequate by from 25% to 40%. Practically the same ratios apply as well to contents, whether those contents be furniture in homes or stock in stores and warehouses.

It is particularly important that holders of co-insurance contracts should keep their insurance up to the increased values. Failure to do this will mean, in event of a fire, that the property owner will be compelled to shoulder a greater percentage of the loss than he desires or intended. Now is the time for agents, brokers and solicitors to render service to their clients by keeping them informed. Every client is a prospect for additional insurance.

**FIRE PREVENTION: A WAR TIME NECESSITY.**

Among the varied "war-work" undertaken by the National Board of Fire Underwriters, in the United States, is the preparation and wide distribution of a booklet entitled "Safeguarding Industry, A War-Time Necessity," dealing with the vital subject of fire prevention under war conditions. Obviously, a publication of this kind, if it has any effect at all, will produce results long after the conditions which evoked it have passed, and the idea seems well worthy of imitation elsewhere. Existing circumstances make the economic arguments for fire prevention much more arresting than under normal conditions, and an exceptional opportunity is presented at the present time to do some really effective work in this connection. The booklet is extremely practical in character, containing a discussion of six vital points in fire prevention, which are classified as follows:—disorder, ignorance and carelessness, defective equipment, faulty construction, insufficient protection and lack of defense. Concerning each of these, wise counsel is given and points of instruction are deftly driven home. The effect of the increase in the 1916 per capita fire loss of the United States over that of 1915, is picturesquely expressed in the conclusion that the sum of increase would have built nearly 30,000 aeroplanes, or many hundreds of torpedo boat destroyers. The whole production is a credit to the public spirit of American underwriters, and a characteristic example of the enterprising use of circumstances. We commend the idea to Canadian underwriters as a new opportunity for public-spirited and patriotic service.

**INSURANCE COMPANIES' SUBSCRIPTIONS TO WAR LOANS.**

A considerable proportion of the subscriptions of insurance companies to Canada's Victory Loan remains yet to be announced. The following have so far been notified:—

Canada Life.....	\$5,000,000
Crown Life.....	200,000
Excelsior Life.....	200,000
Great-West Life.....	2,000,000
Imperial Life.....	1,000,000
Law Union & Rock.....	350,000
Liverpool & London & Globe..	100,000
London & Lancashire Life.....	150,000
Metropolitan Life.....	5,000,000
Mount Royal Assurance.....	100,000
Mutual Life of Canada.....	3,000,000
Sauvegarde.....	70,000

Mr. H. C. Cox, president of the Canada Life, states that that Company's subscription of \$5,000,000 represents practically all revenue for the ensuing year, after making provision for claims and current expenses. The Company has received the thanks of the Minister of Finance for their "magnificent subscription." This amount, added to previous War Loan subscriptions, brings the Canada Life's total up to \$8,500,000.

**CANADIAN LIFE COMPANIES' WAR CLAIMS.**

Up to the end of 1916, the Canadian life companies paid in all war claims amounting to \$4,069,416. Extra war risk premiums collected were only \$269,534.

Mr. V. A. Lemieux, formerly Inspector of the Imperial Life at Quebec City, has been made Branch Manager at Quebec.