

wastage through desertion, superannuation, the breakdown of health and through the weeding out of undesirable clerks.

Thus the Canadian banking system probably offers employment to more than 100 new clerks per month. Many of the new employees are secured in Scotland and England. Canada cannot supply the whole.

THE TAXING OF THE INSURANCE COMPANIES: EDUCATION WANTED.

The practice of turning to insurance companies when additional revenue is required by provincial and other authorities seems to be becoming epidemic throughout Canada. East and west proposals are on foot at the present time to place new and unjust imposts upon fire and life organisations. The companies have been burdened with taxation of this kind for years, and the ease of its collection makes it a tempting proposition to hard-up public authorities to add to their revenue by making the burden heavier. Besides, there is no argument against a ten per cent. tax upon insurance companies' premiums which cannot be urged against a one per cent. tax, so that there is nothing save the modesty of the taxing authorities concerned to prevent taxation upon insurance companies being raised to preposterous heights once the principle has been conceded. So that it is not sufficient to make a successful resistance to new imposts; if the existing condition of affairs is to be improved it is necessary to go to the root of the matter and bring home the true incidence of these taxes to those who are paying them.

The fact that upon any reasonable principles of taxation a tax of this kind cannot be justified is not likely to dissuade politicians from imposing it, so long as they are not likely to be found out by the great body of policyholders who are also voters. It is probable enough that at the present time ninety-nine out of every hundred policyholders in the Dominion, whether fire or life, have not the remotest notion of the extent to which they are paying taxation through their insurance premiums. Drive home the facts to them; arouse their interest; show them the exact amount which they are paying in this taxation and you have gone a long way to curbing the activities of politicians in this connection. Both fire and life companies have an excellent case. As we pointed out last week, the position of the fire underwriter who is doing an above-board business in Canada is thoroughly unsatisfactory at the present time. In return for the taxes which he pays, he gets nothing. But instead, he has the privilege of having his business cut into by a crowd of unlicensed concerns from abroad, who compete for business at lower rates without paying the customary taxes and without investing a dollar in Canada. No case of gross injustice could be clearer.

The life companies have an equally good case. A man denies himself—and the taking of a policy of life insurance does involve, in the vast majority of instances, a very real measure of self-denial—in order to provide to the best of his ability either for those dependent on him or for his own old-age, and as a reward for his thrift he is forced to pay taxation, which his neighbor, who takes no thought for the morrow, escapes. What an advertisement for Canada—we tax the thrifty and let the improvident go scot free!

While the present condition of affairs cannot be remedied at once, it is extremely undesirable to accept existing circumstances as an immovable evil. United with vigorous action where fresh impositions are proposed, such as has been partially successful in some recent instances, there should be, we suggest, a steadily persistent and long continued education of public opinion. Opposition by insurance companies or insurance men, as such, can always be loftily dismissed as "interested"; but the case is altered when the opposition comes from the general public. It is here that the fieldman can do invaluable work by steady, quiet effort. Reduced taxation means lower rates, larger profits to policyholders, more attractive policies. The effort is worth all the energy that can be put into it.

"BRITISH EMPIRE MUTUAL'S" PROFITS.

Policyholders of the old "British Empire Mutual Life Assurance Company," which is now merged in the "Phoenix of London," have reason to be congratulated upon the declaration of profits for the five-year period which ended on the 31st December, 1911. The bonus addition to the sum assured was, on those full bonus policies paying the English rate of premium, which have been in force for five full years, \$125 per \$1,000, while on those policies paying the Canadian rate of premium the bonus is \$95. In the "Temperance Section" the bonuses are even higher, being \$137.50 and \$105 respectively. In addition, very large interim bonuses are guaranteed in respect of policies becoming claims by death or survivorship before the end of 1916. The chief contributory causes of the handsome results achieved were the high interest rate and the exceptionally low rate of mortality experienced during the period. Under the skilful and careful management of the "Phoenix" the policyholders of the "British Empire" may look forward with confidence to a continuation of the prosperity of the last five years.

The joint managers of the "Phoenix of London" in Canada are Messrs. R. MacD. Paterson and J. B. Paterson, while Mr. H. B. F. Bingham is the life superintendent.

Mr. A. S. Jarvis, manager of the Union Bank of Canada at Montreal, has been appointed superintendent of branches for Quebec and the Maritime Provinces, with headquarters at Quebec. Mr. B. B. Carter, manager at Regina, will succeed Mr. Jarvis.