

Canada Life Facts

Canada Life agents wrote \$1,000,000 more business in Canada in 1915 than in the previous year.

The Canada Life paid policyholders in 1915 \$7,522,201, this being over \$3,000,000 in excess of the similar payments of any previous year, and policyholders' dividends being the chief item of the increase.

The Canada Life Income in 1915, \$9,333,632.19 was the greatest in the Company's history.

The Surplus earned was \$1,480,866.

The Cash Dividends paid policyholders in 1915 were over \$2,800,000.



HERBERT C. COX,
President and General Manager.
C. A. C. BRUCE, Manager, St. John's.

LONDON GOSSIP.

LONDON, January 29, 1916.

POSTCARDS FROM THE TRENCHES

Christmas cards posted from the trenches reached Great Britain by the thousand this year. A popular kind was a highly fanciful affair in which the little French shops behind the firing line have been specialising this year—a little satchel of gauze containing a silk handkerchief embroidered with colors of the Allies. These "cards" cost about an average day's pay. The London Rifle Brigade's card was an excellent drawing by a rifleman, with vignettes illustrating the life of the soldier in the four seasons—spring, firing hard over the parapet; summer, carrying shells; autumn, standing at attention; and winter, setting off (if he is lucky) to listen like Father Christmas, bound for "Blighy."

BISHOP OF SALISBURY PLAIN TALKS.

The Bishop of Salisbury has enjoyed exceptional opportunities of association with the new armies. He is known in the military service and at the War Office as "the Bishop of Salisbury Plain," and is the spiritual overseer of that extensive camp. He was recently asked by a notable personage in our public life to give his opinion of the character of the armies which proceed from the plain to the areas of operations. "The best-behaved armies the world has ever known," declared the bishop. "They will not only fight well; they live well." The comment of a cynical person on this may be added: "Right well, there's no doubt of that. As for living well, the young rascals have had no opportunities for living ill. The military authorities have seen to that." No doubt, there is a certain truth in this view. The virtues thrive on Salisbury Plain better than in places less remote from temptation. But on the whole the bishop is right. The world has never seen a cleaner-living and better-mannered soldiery than ours. I know one of our military districts here pretty intimately, and travel daily with soldiers up and down, preferring their company to that of the snobocracy of a first-class carriage. The only criticism I would venture to pass is that when they are going to the front or back to the front they exercise a supernatural intensity in concealing reputed quarrels of whiskey about their heavily-accoutred persons. They cannot buy

less under our sapient drink order. At the main line stations here there are immense posters prohibiting soldiers from taking liquor with them on the trains. There is a rumor that one bottle was confiscated—an empty bottle; but the story originated in a military quarter.

GRAVES OF THE ANZACS.

A correspondent in close touch with the Anzac soldiers here writes: "The Australian is most reticent, but he says quite frankly that what hurts him most in the abandonment of Anzac is the thought that now he will never be able to go back to keep his friends company, to mount guard over the gullies and ridges where his best pals lie buried. Gallipoli is to his mind peopled to-day with the spirits of all the heroes who have died. The Anzac men never rested till they gave them what decent burial they could—happiest if they could raise some lasting memorial. There are many little cemeteries around Anzac, beside Lone Pine, under the shelter of the cliffs, by the beach, up Shrapnel Gully, and in one place the New Zealanders have a small, beautiful graveyard of their own, where Maories and white men are buried. The Maories, who have the greatest respect for the dead and consider every place where a dead man lies for ever 'tapu,' guarded by spirits, who will do a mischief to any showing disrespect or even trespassing on the ground, took great pains with the graves of their brave warriors. They brought stones up from the beach and arranged them in elaborate designs above the grave, or they carved little wooden images of goods with their gleaming shell eyes askew in wonderfully carved faces. It is a custom that one had fancied almost outworn at Gallipoli. At first the burials used to take place with great precautions during the day but the danger was too great—there was one occasion when the machine-guns were turned on the party and chaplains, and all had to take shelter in the graves. After that the services were always held at night, and no lights were allowed. The experience was eerie in the extreme, but the desire of the authorities that, unless it were quite impossible, a religious service should be held over the grave was always carried out. Many of the crosses bear the name of one man, but there are

others inscribed 'To the memory of sixty Australians.' These mark the scenes of great contests where thousands flung themselves into the fight and only hundreds returned."

A TURF MACHIAVELLI.

Charles Hibbert, the bookmaker, whose death is announced, was a turf Machiavelli who pursued his affairs to so successful a degree that sporting men are wondering whether his fortune will exceed the £550,000 left by Robert Steel, of Sheffield. Since the days of Captain Macell no one has been credited with such powers of pulling the turf springs as the bookmaker and owner of thoroughbreds who died on December 26th in his seventieth year. His father was a Nottingham publican who made a book, as did several of his descendants, none of whom, however, flourished like "Clarley Hibbert." As a youngster he made a book over Sheffield handicaps, accepting three-penny stakes, and there was a great deal of money to be made in this innocent way, many of the pedestrians being "non-triers." But Hibbert soon followed the turf, and that at a time when there were such people as Lord Hastings about. By the end of 1895, Hibbert was a £30,000 man, having his own racing colors registered and mixing with very clever people. He stuck to business to the last, and was the "dean of the ring." Gus Jacobs being his only contemporary. He was liked and feared. He had extraordinary good fortune, although his complaints were more frequent than his "h's." He used to say, "They don't handicap my horses. They handicap Hibbert. They think 'e's 'ot." Charles Hibbert was a real specimen of a phase of our national life which surely the war will have purged for ever from English sport.

AN IDEAL OFFICERS' CLUB.

Many officers who have reached the convalescent stage in the Metropolitan hospitals make a point of dropping in for tea at the town mansion of Baroness de Forest in Grosvenor Street. It is in its way the most exclusive and yet the most open club in London, and every afternoon you may find the great drawing-room occupied by men who are perfect strangers to each other, but have the common link of being comparatively friendless in London, with their homes some hundreds and often thousands of miles away. Baroness de Forest was anxious, in describing the scheme to me, to place the credit where she declared it was due, for she confessed it was really the idea of the Hon. Mrs. Bingham, wife of General Bingham. The "Officers' Club," to which the Baroness escorted me, is one of those enormous rooms, richly but at the same time cosily furnished, which are only to be found in a few parts of fashionable London. Sometimes there are half a dozen officers there, sometimes a good many more. Tea is served every afternoon. There are bridge tables and reading matter of all kinds, and innumerable easy chairs and chintz-covered divans, so that groups of guests can have a quiet talk round the fires. Best of all, there is no ceremony of any kind. Any officer in uniform goes straight up the main stairs into the "club," and since all are strangers they are all the best of friends very soon. As this rendezvous becomes more widely known it should prove a great boon to numbers of officers who have plenty of friends in the distant North but few in London.

A BOOM IN GRAMOPHONES.

An unprecedented demand exists just now for talking machines of all kinds, and prices are considerably increased as compared with last year. Ever since the war began there has been a steadily growing demand for these instruments. Thousands of them have found their way into the army camps and training centres for the betterment of off-duty leisure, as well as into the great military hospitals, where to the convalescent patients they have proved a pleasant means of passing many weary hours of enforced idleness. Many more have performed an equally useful task in the Fleet. They have brought something of the lighter side of the life at home into the midst of the grim circumstances of the theatre of war. In addition to the inflated demand which talking machine manufacturers have had to meet for these purposes there has been a greatly increased sale in the ordinary market, due to the ability which high wages give to the wage-earning classes at the present time to spend money on accustomed luxuries. In pre-war days the British talking machine industry was, like many other branches of our trade, greatly dependent on America and the Continent for the supply of essential material and parts, and it had to compete on keen terms in the home market with finished machines also sent in from abroad. Now, of course, the supply of thousands of machines and records which used to come from Germany has ceased, and the American producers find considerable difficulty in supplying our market, because of the freight conditions and the taxation under the new Finance

Act. On the other hand, though the British manufacturer now finds himself pretty much in command of the field, he is in a difficulty in regard to obtaining the parts, such as motors, sound-boxes, and so forth, which formerly were mainly imported from Switzerland, Germany and America.

WAR AND THE TRAMP.

The effect of war upon the London vagrant has been to abolish him. On the night of December 11 there were no inmates in the London casual wards. Sleepers on the Embankment now only exist in tender-hearted melo-dramas. The elimination of the casual began during John Burns' time at the Local Government Board, and had made good progress before the war. The transfer of the casual wards from the guardians to the Metropolitan Asylums Board brought down the figures with a run from about a thousand a night five years ago to 170, or so a night just before the war. The temporary prosperity of war conditions has had astonishing results on the homeless class generally. The London County Council has for years taken a census of the homeless wanderers in London. On February 18, 1910, these numbered 5,444, of whom 969 were in the streets. On the same night last year the number was 2,381, of whom 434 were in the streets, and since then the homeless as a class have disappeared. No one knows exactly what has become of them. The old army men among them are with the colors. Many have been tempted to regular work, and it is easier for the rest to find someone to keep them now that money is so plentiful. The authorities are keeping all their machinery ready for dealing with the rush of vagrancy which many people expect during the transition period after the war. The tramp register kept by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children—a record of every person known to be exploiting a child for begging—also shows a remarkable decline. At the moment the roads are almost free from the miserable spectacle of the child tramp.

THE WINTER SALES.

The sales are beginning early this season. Several of the large shops began theirs December 30th, and others had already had their first very prosperous day. The extent of their sales must indeed have surprised them as much as the Christmas selling did, but probably people are realizing so keenly the rapid rise in prices that they will feel it the truest economy to shop now. One shop advertised significantly enough that goods would be sold "almost at the old prices," and a look at the windows is proof that the time for wonderful bargains has gone. There is a good demand for coats and skirts, but no very obvious reason why the shops should be eager to clear off this season's stock, since many women will probably not care for the next year or so whether a costume is quite the latest style—in fact, there may be a certain shyness about wearing conspicuously smart clothes. Silks are being offered at prices not likely to be repeated, for France's stock must by now be almost exhausted, and though the merchants are sending over to us colors which have no longer any sale in France, we may soon expect the great variety of colors to disappear altogether from the market, while we accustom ourselves to a world which has difficulty in keeping even navy blue among its more sombre tints. Now that so many people are making their own clothes, the shops will expect to do a good trade in dress materials and trimmings, but even this, the most laudable of bargainings, will be checked by the fact that so many women are now in uniforms or overalls. If the respirator bargain table was a feature of the summer sales—did anyone ever wear the respirators when bought?—the winter sales will be distinguished by the bargains in linen overalls for women workers at canteens or munition factories.

THE "BEST SELLING" BOOKS.

While the year just closed has not been good in a book sense, it has nevertheless, provided some books entitled to rank as "best sellers." Of expensive works Lord Rededaale's "Memories" has gone into six editions. Mr. Oliver's volume, "The Ordeal of Battle," which discusses the British ideals in this great war, has sold 21,000 copies. A friendly little book from America on the causes of the war, Owen Wister's "Pentecost of Calamity," has had a large popularity. The note of Ian Hay's volume, "The First Hundred Thousand," is notably Scottish, but that has not prevented the book from being very acceptable in the year in that they have sold fairly well, not more than that, and that there has been no "great novel."

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