

PERSONALS.

Mr. William Mackay, manager for Canada, Royal Insurance Co., left this week on a business trip to the Coast.

Mr. Edgar Nicholson, superintendent of agencies, Dale & Co., Montreal, has returned to the city after a year's absence in Winnipeg. Mr. Nicholson informs us that business prospects in the West are most encouraging, owing mainly to the prosperity of the farmers.

Lieutenant J. N. Bales, whose promotion from the ranks we reported a few weeks ago, is now reported wounded. Lieut. Bales, prior to the war, was cashier at the Montreal office of the Manufacturers' Life, and is a son of Captain Bales, of the Montreal Port Warden's office.

Lieutenant H. E. B. Platt, reported this week killed in Flanders while on patrol duty, was the only son of Mr. A. T. Platt, who recently retired from the secretaryship, after many years' service, of the London Mutual Fire Insurance Company. Lieutenant Pratt, who was 25 years of age, had a brilliant career at the University of Toronto, and when war broke out was a first-year student at Osgoode Hall.

Mr. E. Roger Owen, chairman of the Ocean Accident and Guarantee, suggested at the recent annual meeting that the margin of profit of British accident companies is likely to be reduced after the war, owing to the return to civilian life of thousands of men now serving as soldiers, of whom many will suffer from some defect or other and in consequence be more liable to accidents and less able to recover quickly.

A veteran banker retires at length from active service in the person of Mr. G. W. Yarker, manager of the Toronto Clearing House. Mr. Yarker has now resigned that position after a service of fourteen years. Previously, Mr. Yarker had occupied important positions in the service of the Bank of Montreal. He is succeeded as manager of the Toronto Clearing House by Mr. A. B. Barker, of the Bank of Toronto.

LIABILITY FOR COST OF EXTINGUISHING FIRES.

That in certain American cities, legal liability for the cost of extinguishing fires is now imposed upon citizens disobeying fire prevention orders is stated by the Committee on Public Information of the National Fire Prevention Association. The State of Pennsylvania has adopted legislation in this sense for cities of the second class and the city of Cleveland also has an ordinance to this effect. A similar ordinance is now before the city councils of other cities. The foundation is already laid, therefore, say the committee for a direct and positive influence upon the fire waste as soon as we can fully develop the fire department inspection service which is so rapidly extending, and which will furnish the basis for legal action.

Of a total of £145,724,600 new issues made in London in the first three months of the year, £143,220,000 comes under the heading of British Government loans.

THE APRIL FIRE LOSS.

The losses by fire in the United States and Canada during the month of April, as compiled from the records of the New York Journal of Commerce reached a total of \$12,681,050, as compared with \$38,680,250 in March this year and \$18,180,350 in April, 1915. The fire losses for the first four months of 1916 aggregate \$97,555,420, as against \$70,108,600 charged against the same months of 1915. The following table gives a comparison of the losses for the first four months of 1916 with those of 1915 and 1914, together with the monthly losses for the balance of those years:

	1914.	1915.	1916.
January.....	\$23,204,700	\$20,060,600	\$21,423,350
February.....	21,744,200	13,081,252	24,770,770
March.....	25,512,750	18,786,400	38,680,250
April.....	17,700,800	18,180,350	12,681,050
Total 4 months...	\$88,162,450	\$70,108,600	\$97,555,420
May.....	15,507,800	11,388,450	
June.....	29,348,000	10,893,950	
July.....	17,539,800	9,006,800	
August.....	11,765,650	10,067,100	
September.....	14,383,050	14,823,500	
October.....	14,004,700	14,465,850	
November.....	21,372,750	21,204,850	
December.....	23,507,150	20,877,100	
Total for year...	\$235,591,350	\$182,836,200	

The first four months of 1916 have been abnormally expensive to the fire underwriters, says the Journal of Commerce, the fire losses having exceeded those for the same period of 1915 by over \$27,000,000. April was the only month not yielding a much heavier loss than the same month in the preceding year. The outlook for the balance of the year is not bad, however, but the chances of evening up such an enormous handicap are too inconsiderable to give the fire underwriters much encouragement.

CANADA LIFE IN UNITED KINGDOM.

The favourable light in which the Canada Life is regarded in the Mother Country, remarks the London Post Magazine, is seen in the fact that practically one-ninth of the premiums relate to business within the United Kingdom. This is the outcome of about thirteen years' work, on the part of an institution dating back to 1847, and a pioneer in the Dominion; and during the last twelvemonth the proportion of the total premium increase standing to the credit of the Metropolis and the branches controlled therefrom has been more than maintained. In the annuity section the terms which the Company has been able to offer have attracted business here to such an extent that it is paying out annually to annuitants more than twice its disbursements on this account elsewhere; and although the £62,931 of annuity consideration received during 1915 was much below recent figures—a circumstance for which various contributory causes readily suggest themselves—£52,721 of the reduced total was forthcoming from this side of the Atlantic.

It may well be that with our expenditure upon the war this year and next year, if the war should last so long, and with further expenditure connected with the war succeeding—the conclusion of the war—because we shall not immediately be able to disband our troops and stop our war expenditure—the national debt of Canada, when this war is concluded, will reach \$1,000,000,000.—Sir Thomas White.