

### AS TO INCREASED COMMISSIONS

In discussing the request of Southern local agents, who wanted a compromise with the companies, who refused (in view of existing conditions) any increase in commissions.

The Insurance Field says:—It is only fair to say that the companies were under quite as much pressure to refuse, as the agents were to request.

During the period of world unrest fire insurance has been the one business interest that has not increased its prices, although its expenses have mounted. It has been able to do this only because of increased intensive production. In 1915, the first year of the great war, the net American premiums were \$350,000,000. In 1919 they amounted to \$692,000,000, an increase of almost 100 per cent. Much of this was upon other lines than fire, much of it on new lines produced by our entry upon the war. The present high prices, which also affect replacements of real property, leave no doubt that the bulk of the increase was increase on the same property and the cover has hardly yet been brought up to the exposed value. Agents have increased their earnings on the average in the same proportion that the business has increased. If they have not it would seem to be due to neglect of opportunity. Energetic agents have made more money than ever before and we hope the wise ones have given the cold eye to extravagance and saved some of it.

It is probable that no class of business men have worked harder than insurance agents in the past three years. They had no wage increase. It was all "over time" effort and yet they have not as a rule more than kept up with the increased cost of living. All around they have seen wages and profits mounting up in every line of commerce and production. They alone found no increased value put upon their time and training. What increase of earnings they got they did increased work for.

Without increased rates in the face of the anxiously expected slump in prices and business

the companies fear to increase any charges upon premiums. Insurance is a peculiar business. The average man who never has had a loss does not often appreciate the value of mere protection evidenced only by a policy contract. He pays the premium with a certain reluctance and as long as he has no loss he thinks he is entitled to a reduction instead of an increase in rate and expense. The public made up of such general opinion will look with disfavor on any increase in commissions to agents or in any other expense that can be avoided. If the companies prove to have made any large profits out of their recent experience it is well to remember that we are facing conditions that may require all they have made and more. We are dealing with unrest, industrial uncertainty and vast financial problems that may strain every department of business. Agents no less than others are protected in their own business by having the strength of their companies increased to the utmost to meet any emergency that may arise in the future.

### PERSONALS

Mr. George Weir, General Manager for Canada, London Guarantee and Accident Co. Ltd., Toronto, has left for an extended business and pleasure trip in England and Scotland. Mr. Weir has been successful in winning his place on the rifle team to represent Canada at Bisley this year. Mr. Weir is no novice at shooting, having at the Ontario Rifle Association meet at Long Branch last Fall, secured first place for the City of Toronto prize, and also for the MacKenzie prize, and having also won at that meet the Lieutenant Governor's gold medal.

Mr. H. J. May, Superintendent of the Casualty department of the Alliance Assurance Co. of London, England, who has been visiting important agencies of the Company in Canada for some weeks sailed for home on the 9th instant, per S.S. Victoria from Quebec.

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