

### THE INDIVIDUAL'S LIFE INSURANCE.

While the Canadian totals of life insurance in force have been largely increased in recent years, and now form a not unimpressive index to the thrift and well-being of the Dominion's population, the real significance of these aggregates can only be appreciated, when they are viewed from the standpoint of the individual. In the last two or three years, the Insurance Department at Ottawa has taken the trouble to compile the total amount of life insurance in force in Canada, company and fraternal, including both Dominion and provincial licenses. From this compilation, it appears that the aggregate amount of insurance in force in Canada at December 31st, 1917, was \$2,064,577,579. Taking the population of Canada as 8,000,000 this represents a per capita life insurance of \$258 compared with \$233 in the preceding year, a very fair advance.

Of the total amount in force, practically four-fifths, or \$1,602,235,531 is carried by old-line companies (approximately \$200 per capita) and about one-fifth, or \$462,342,048 by fraternal (\$58 per capita). At the end of 1916, these proportions of total insurance in force were three-quarters and one-quarter. So that it is evident the old-line companies made very much greater progress proportionately last year than the fraternal. This is an excellent sign, since there are a considerable number of the fraternal still in an unsound position, and it is not to the general well-being, but above that of the individual policyholder, that they should expand their liabilities on terms, which make the faithful carrying-out of obligations assumed, impossible.

In point of fact, the figures given above do not quite accurately represent the totals of life insurance carried by Canadians. In addition, there are the policies taken out in Great Britain and the United States, and still maintained in force by those who have since become residents of Canada. For instance, in recent years, and the war has aided rather than retarded this movement, there has been a considerable influx into Canada of American technical and professional men, already occupying fair positions before coming to Canada, and it may be assumed with some confidence that the total of this outside life insurance carried by present residents of Canada, were it ascertainable, would make a perceptible addition to the aggregates given above.

#### Premiums and Claims.

To keep in force their life insurance, Canadians during 1917 paid over a million and a quarter dollars a week, in all an amount of \$67,353,611. This is an increase of nearly a quarter of a million dollars weekly, or \$12,000,000 for the year, over the preceding annual period—a very notable development. Getting these figures down to their lowest terms, they show that the average per capita payment for life insurance in Canada last year was 15½ cents, an increase of two cents over the year 1916.

On the other hand, the companies and fraternal paid claims last year at the rate of \$560,000 weekly, in all a total of \$29,055,015. These payments, which were, of course, swelled by war

claims, were about \$88,000 larger per week than in 1916. Apart from war claims, there is, of course, a general tendency, as Canadian life insurance organisations increase in age, for the ratio of claims paid to premiums received, steadily to advance.

How these figures compare with the average per capita life insurance of other countries, we are not able to say, but the probabilities suggest that they compare very favourably. However, that may be, these figures do reveal the immensity of the field which lies before the Canadian life insurance agent. Even at the present time, out of Canada's population of 8,000,000, there can be hardly less than 3,000,000 of insurable age, in good health and able to keep in force, a fair, if not a large, amount of insurance. To give these 3,000,000 an average of a \$1,000 policy apiece (not an excessive amount by any manner of means), would mean an increase in Canadian insurance in force of 50 per cent. over its level at the end of last year. As the great strides made by Canadian life insurance in recent years have been largely helped by the expansion of business insurance, and other modern developments, the life insurance agent in Canada has an even longer way to go than this before it can be claimed that the average individual in the Dominion is covered by life insurance to an even modestly adequate extent.

### SOLICITOR GENERAL GUTHRIE

At the recent convention of Life Underwriters held in New York, a rousing reception was given Solicitor General Guthrie, of Canada, who made a stirring address, which was listened to with the closest attention. He told of Canada's great sacrifices, on some days as many as 10,000 casualties being reported. At Vimy Ridge the Canadians had lost 10,000 men, but they captured 11,500 prisoners, as well as killing many of the enemy. He gave the lie to the German propaganda that Britain was not doing her part in the war, an attempt to spread ill feeling among the Allies. He said that the little islands of Great Britain, not so big in area as the State of New-York, had raised an army of 6,000,000 men, while with her colonies the army was 8,500,000, larger than any of the Allied armies, and that the casualties of Great Britain had averaged 2,000 a day. They have been 3,000,000 to date.

Solicitor General Guthrie told of the diplomatic mistakes of Germany, her blunder in thinking England would not go to the defense of Belgium; in thinking that the American troops would not be a factor in the war; in feeling that the silken thread binding British colonies would be broken.

"That silken thread is now an iron chain," said the Solicitor General. "Nothing can break it." He felt that there were no longer any geographical or other lines of demarcation between Canada and the United States. "We regard you as brothers, now," he said, "and shall for centuries to come."

The Solicitor General has two sons who have answered the call. He concluded by advising Americans to pay no attention to peace propaganda from Germany. The only way to whip the Germans, is to do so on the battlefield.