

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION IN ALBERTA

Official Synopsis of Commission's Report and Recommendations—All Claims to Board

The following synopsis of the report of the commission which investigated workmen's compensation in Alberta, has been furnished *The Monetary Times* by Hon. Charles Stewart, premier of Alberta:—

On August 22nd, 1917, a commission consisting of three members was appointed by the lieutenant-governor-in-council to make an investigation into workmen's compensation in Alberta, and as a result of their investigation submitted, on January 22nd, 1918, to the lieutenant-governor-in-council, a report in the form of a draft bill.

Among other things this bill provides that what is known as state insurance should be adopted covering all industries covered by the Workmen's Compensation Act now in force.

In addition to this, provision is made for the payment of immediate medical aid and the payment of compensation for industrial diseases.

It is suggested that the different industries be divided into schedules and that the act should go into force on August 1st, 1918.

Board of Three Members.

For the purpose of administration a board consisting of three members to be appointed by the lieutenant-governor-in-council will be constituted. This board will be responsible for the collection of a sufficient amount of money from the employers without the assistance of the employees for the purpose of establishing a fund from which all compensation for injuries to workmen would be paid.

For the purposes of assessment if any workmen is being paid at the rate of more than \$2,000 per annum, the employer of such workman will pay assessment on his wages as if they were \$2,000 per annum.

Compensation in the case of death will be paid to a widow at the rate of \$20 per month and \$5 per month for each child, not exceeding in the whole, however, \$2,500. Where no dependants are left by the workman who has been killed, the expenses of burial, not exceeding \$75, will be provided.

Permanent and Temporary Incapacity.

In the case of a workman meeting with an accident which causes permanent total incapacity, monthly payments, not exceeding in the whole \$2,500, will be made.

In the case of permanent partial incapacity, stipulated sums are provided, varying according to the nature of the incapacity. The largest amount paid is \$1,000 for the loss of an arm.

In the case of temporary total incapacity, a flat rate of \$10 per week is paid for any person over twenty-one years of age, and \$7.50 for any person under twenty-one years of age.

For temporary partial incapacity an amount equal to fifty-five per cent. of the difference between the wages earned by the person previous to the injury and the wages earned by him after the injury.

The assessment to be made on the employer may be either a percentage on the payroll or a lump sum, but in no case will the sum assessed be less than \$5.

Where a workman received an injury which disables him for a period of fourteen days or more, he shall be paid compensation from the day of the accident, but if he is disabled for a period of less than fourteen days he shall be paid for and from the fourth day after the accident, except where the injury is attributable to the wilful and serious misconduct of the workman, unless the injury results in death or serious disablement.

All Claims to Board.

No action shall lie for the recovery of compensation, but all claims for compensation shall be heard and determined by the board. The provisions of the act shall be in lieu of all rights and right of action, statutory or otherwise to each workman or his dependants are or may be entitled, against the employer of such workman for or by reason of any accident happening to him while in the employment of such employer and action in respect thereof shall lie.

No sum payable as compensation shall be capable of being assigned, charged or attached.

A medical referee shall be appointed by the board who shall examine any person coming under the provisions of this act when required by the board to do so.

All compensation due shall be paid on the first and third Saturdays of each month.

Must Comply With Act.

It shall be a contravention of the act if any employer keeps in his employment any workman unless such employer has complied with the provisions of this act.

Each employer shall be required to notify the board within twenty-four hours after the happening of an accident.

Penalties not exceeding \$500 and costs and in default of payment, imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months are provided for any violation of the act.

No proceedings shall be instituted for violations against the act except by some person appointed by the board.

GREAT-WEST LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY

In an exceptionally clear and concise address to the shareholders, Mr. A. Macdonald, president of the Great-West Life Assurance Company, at the annual meeting outlined the company's progress and emphasized the many strong features of its position. There has been a definite improvement in the three vital surplus factors, and this appears in the form of surplus earnings increased by 20 per cent. A large new business usually has an adverse effect upon the surplus of the year in which the substantial business is secured through the first-year premiums being inadequate to cover the initial expenses and the reserve required by law. In 1917, the Great-West Life, however, increased the new business by 25 per cent. and the surplus earnings by 20 per cent., a commendable achievement.

During the past year the company received applications for policies of \$34,435,396, and insurances were issued amounting to \$30,309,542, an increase of nearly \$5,000,000 over the previous year. The total insurance in force now amounts to \$152,643,165, an increase of \$19,626,717 during the year. This is the largest increase in the company's history, and is a record of which the field force particularly may feel proud.

The assets of the Great-West Life show an increase of \$2,683,095 for the year, and now amount to \$24,385,666. The premiums received in 1917 amounted to \$4,934,625, the receipts from interest and rents were \$1,499,807, and the total income was \$6,437,320 (not including calls on capital). The company has \$13,021,491 invested in first mortgages on real estate, and the experience of the past year has again confirmed the directors' belief that this form of investment combines the best security with the highest interest returns. The rate of interest for 1917, as reported to the government, was 7.36 per cent. The company has subscribed to our war loans to the extent of \$5,652,500, of which \$3,829,000 has been allotted and \$2,505,337 paid up.

The death claims of 1917 exceeded those of 1916 by \$76,797. As a percentage, this is an increase of 7 per cent., but, on the other hand, the business in force increased nearly 15 per cent. Consequently, the experience of the year was more favorable than in 1916, and the actual claims were 74 per cent. of those provided for under the mortality tables. The Great-West Life has always enjoyed a low mortality rate, and in view of the fact that war claims to the amount of \$457,082 were incurred in 1917, the past year was actually one of the best in the company's history, so far as claims from ordinary causes are concerned.

The Great-West Life, which is under the capable management of Mr. C. C. Ferguson, has become one of our largest and leading companies. Its growth in the past decade is seen in the following table:—

Year.	Business in force.	Assets.	Surplus.
1907	\$33,566,724	\$ 4,525,558	\$ 523,398
1912	83,978,739	12,251,982	1,675,051
1917	152,643,165	24,385,666	3,074,959

In ten years, therefore, the company has multiplied the business in force by over four, the assets by over five and the surplus by nearly six, a notable record. During 1917 45 per cent. of the total new business of the company was obtained east of the Great Lakes, the balance coming from Western Canada and North Dakota.