

INSURANCE SUBSCRIPTIONS TO BRITISH WAR LOAN.

Following is a revised list of subscriptions by British insurance companies operating in the Canadian field, to the recent British war loan. The figures given are those stated by London contemporaries. The total amount subscribed by insurance organizations to this loan does not appear, but the fact that incomplete returns showed a total of £112,000,000 indicates the great importance of insurance subscriptions in the success of the loan.

Alliance, £5,000,000, including conversions.
 Atlas, £1,000,000.
 British Dominions General, £1,250,000.
 British Dominions & Eagle, £4,000,000.
 Caledonian, £820,000, £690,000 being new money, making Company's holdings of war stocks, £880,000.
 Commercial Union, £5,000,000.
 Employers' Liability, £406,000, £122,000 being new.
 General Accident Fire and Life, £250,000, £45,000 new.
 Gresham Life, £850,000; £542,000 being new.
 Guardian, £1,500,000; of which £600,000 is new money.
 Law Union & Rock, £2,000,000.
 Liverpool & London & Globe, £2,000,000, £1,500,000 being new money.
 London Assurance, £1,335,000, £700,000 being new.
 London & Lancashire Fire, £800,000.
 London & Lancashire Life & General, £850,000, £639,000 new.
 North British & Mercantile, £5,000,000, £1,000,000 being new money.
 Northern, £2,000,000, £1,500,000 being new money.
 Norwich Union Fire, new, £700,000.
 Ocean Accident & Guarantee, £1,000,000.
 Phoenix, £3,000,000, including conversions.
 Provincial, £40,000.
 Royal, £3,020,000, of which £1,620,000 is new money.
 Scottish Union & National, £3,000,000, £1,000,000 being new money.
 Standard Life, £4,000,000, including £3,250,000 new money.
 Sun Insurance Office, £1,000,000.
 Sun Life of Canada, £500,000, £287,000 being new money.
 Union Assurance Society, new, £300,000.
 Yorkshire, £1,250,000.

In addition to the above-mentioned subscription, the directors of the Royal Insurance Company took up a further £20,000 to cover applications on behalf of the staff, repayable by instalments. Similar facilities were granted to the staff on the occasion of the issue of the 4½ per cent. loan, when upwards of £17,000 was thus subscribed. The Norwich Union Fire's staff also took up £10,000 (new) under a scheme of advances by the Society, free of interest and repayable by monthly instalments.

Both the London County & Westminster and the London City & Midland banks propose opening branches in several important towns in Spain. It is expected that at the end of the war, if not before, branches of English banks will be established not only in France, Russia and Spain but also in Belgium, Italy and the Balkans.

HINTS ON FIRE INSURANCE INSPECTION.

(II)

In the course of the valuable paper on the inspection of fire insurance risks, recently read at Vancouver, before the Insurance Club of British Columbia, by Mr. Harry Howes, special agent of the Continental, Fidelity-Phenix & Fidelity Underwriters (to which reference was made in last week's issue), Mr. Howes discussed the question of spontaneous combustion. In this connection, Mr. Howes pointed out, there are three principal classes of substances. Those rich in oxygen which they are eager to give up. Nitrates are good examples of this class. Then there are substances which have a strong affinity for oxygen which may be absorbed from the atmosphere or from other substances. Prominent in this class are the vegetable and animal oils. Iron filings, wet powdered charcoal, oiled clothing in piles, clover and alfalfa hay put away green, roasted coffee are only a few of well-known substances which have an element of danger from spontaneous combustion. "The danger from oils is not in bulk, but when distributed over finely divided or fibrous substances like sawdust and rags and especially so when covered up so as to confine the heat produced by the chemical reaction.

THE EXPLOSION HAZARD.

We know, continued Mr. Howes, that sawdust and linseed oil will ignite in a few hours. The rapid drying or oxidization of linseed oil is valuable in paints—a process safe enough in the open but a source of danger when confined. The properties of gasoline and kindred articles are too well known to need discussion. We know the danger of explosion of flour dust when properly mixed with air. Some years ago an explosion of dust in an oatmeal factory blew the roof of the building 125 feet. Such an explosion will wreck any sprinkler equipment and the resulting fire produces the most intense heat. We frequently meet up with statements like this, "Why, this substance is not dangerous; I can put a match to it and it won't burn." The danger of a substance cannot be so determined. You might say this of sodium nitrate, that you can put a match to it and it won't burn, but this substance is hygroscopic—the danger lies in its ability to absorb moisture which may cause a chemical reaction and produce enough heat to ignite the bags containing it. It would be interesting to know, remarked Mr. Howes, what substances are stored and how handled in the warehouses along Vancouver's waterfront, where a serious fire would threaten the city with a conflagration, especially as there is no fire boat. Sweepings may be especially dangerous. Oily rags should never be left out over night. Phosphorous should be kept under water. On the other hand, potassium in a bottle of water would decompose the water, giving off enough heat to ignite the hydrogen produced if confined. Bromine will boil at 60 degrees. Flourine, chlorine, bromine and iodine are unstable and unite readily with other substances. With nitrogen, they form explosive compounds.

DANGEROUS PROCESSES.

Japanning and lacquering processes produce a gas which is dangerous. The drying rooms in wood working need to be ventilated because a gas is given

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