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COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION.

This is one of the important commercial bodies of the country. The Association is composed of some 6,400 commercial travelers who pay \$10 each annually for transportation privileges. Some years ago it was found that the management had been so excellent and economical that it took only some \$2 per member for the expenses of the body, the other \$8 being utilized for the benefits payable on the death of members. During its early years when the members were young and deaths comparatively few, a fund of between \$300,000 to \$400,000 was accumulated. Each year the membership has been growing, and the prospective death benefits increasing until at the close of 1902, when the late William McCabe, F.I.A., the Association's then Actuary, pointed out that it would be absolutely essential to reduce the mortuary benefit from \$1,000, or increase the annual subscription fee. This statement immediately appealed to a large section of the membership, and a committee was appointed to recommend a modification of the mortuary benefit.

The whole question of mortuary benefits has been gone into by the Board during 1903 and 1904, and a sound permanent scheme proposed which, if put into effect, will place the Association upon such a financial basis as it has never heretofore enjoyed, and which will insure its perpetuity.

There has fallen into our hands a circular signed by Mr. E. Fielding, which document is a plea that the mortuary benefit of the Association shall be maintained at \$1,000. The circular is not worthy of being taken seriously, for it is full of fallacies and absurdities. It is such a deliverance as might be expected from a person ignorant of the first principles of life contingencies. Mr. Fielding, or any of his friends who are familiar with merchandise of various kinds, would

laugh in scorn if an inexperienced clerk was taken out of a life assurance office and sent to Europe to buy goods for one of their wholesale houses. It is not a bit less laughable to see Mr. Fielding setting himself up to correct actuaries and financial men as to what is and is not necessary in mortuary calculations.

We shall now refer to only four points in this circular of his. The first is, his building up a structure on the Canada Life's mortality experience and applying it to the mortuary benefit scheme of this Association. The Canada Life's experience is the result of examination of lives which have been first carefully selected by agents, then by local medical examiners, and finally by the chief medical referee at the company's head office. Of those who apply, at least one-tenth were rejected, the result being that the experience of the Canada Life shows a more favorable rate of mortality than that enjoyed by any other life company. The Commercial Travelers' Association does not select its lives, but admits all persons who state that they are commercial travelers and who pay the regular fee; and consequently a number of uninsurable lives will find entrance. Moreover, the actuary of the Canada Life specifically stated in his report "that it should not be too hastily assumed that companies and associations in Canada acting under somewhat different conditions would show as favorable a mortality experience as the Canada Life."

Mr. Fielding goes on to say that the Canadian census confirms the experience of the Canada Life. This is merely an unproved statement. The census of Canada includes persons from age 0 to extreme life, and consequently its results cannot be compared with the mortality experience of a life company in the way in which Mr. Fielding states.

Again, Mr. Fielding has fallen into the error which many amateurs playing with life contingencies