

The president expresses the hope that under the new plan, special attention will be given by the agents to the desirability of the risk from the company's standpoint and he further adds that the company hopes to receive sound advice which will be a benefit in the selection of risks. As an improved mortality means increase in surplus earnings, and increase in surplus earnings inevitably means larger dividends to policyholders, the agent is vitally interested in this new plan as larger dividends to policyholders invariably facilitate the work of the soliciting agents.

It is pointed out that besides co-operating with the society in regard to producing a more favorable mortality experience, the prosperity and prestige of the society will be advanced along lines of personal interest as well.

IMPROVING THE CLASS OF BUSINESS.

President Day has the idea that if agents will give more attention to this part of the business, which is more frequently left to the executive officers and the medical directors of the company, the class of business which the company receives will be improved greatly. This is particularly true because the agent is frequently in a position to know more about the general health, environment and moral hazard in a particular case than the examiners or medical directors could possibly know.

The president calls attention to the fact that if the agent systematically gives the best information at his disposal as to the qualifications of the risk, the home office departments will be less liable to err. It is in the nature of the business that the general agents should know something of the physical characteristics and the personal relationships of the prospect, and, as well as the solicitor, will be able to give, frequently, a more satisfactory judgment on the desirability of the risk than will the officials at the home office hundreds of miles away.

Asking the agents to help in the selection of risks, President Day acknowledges that there are technical points which must necessarily be left to the examiners and to the medical department. Many cases are received yearly which appear satisfactory to the executive force but which the medical department finds defective. Even the executive force, President Day remarks, must yield in matters of this sort to the judgment of the medical directors. In spite of these facts, full weight will be given to the recommendations of the men in the field and particularly to the recommendations of those who establish a reputation for candor and loyalty and whose opinion can be depended upon. Thus, in many cases, the company may be justified in recommending cases on the border line which, if not accompanied by strong recommendations of the soliciting agents, would be promptly declined, without doubt.

This new departure, which it is generally understood is part of the programme along the lines of conservation, which is now being followed by the Equitable, is decidedly interesting, and the results achieved by the Equitable in this connection are likely to be carefully observed.

GUARDING AGAINST LAPSES.

There are lapses and lapses—some that are inevitable and some that can be guarded against. It is in the very nature of life insurance that there will never be a time when lapses will not be somewhat in evidence. Death lapses, for instance, are natural, and are bound to come with the regularity of time. And, again, so long as human nature is constituted as it is, so long as mankind is afflicted with "the thousand ills that flesh is heir to," with all sorts of weaknesses, instabilities, uncertainties, varieties of dispositions, vacillations, irregularities of habits, methods, customs and the like, so long will there be lapses outside the mortuary line to vex life insurance operators, more especially those operating in companies which carry on industrial as well as ordinary business.

But while this much may be admitted, it is undeniable that a vast deal can be done in the way of guarding against an abnormal lapse-rate. Indeed, much has already been done in that direction, thanks to the way in which field men have loyally responded to the incessant desires of companies, which desires have invariably embodied well-thought-out schemes and plans for bringing about reformation and diminution.

HOW TO BEAT DOWN THE EVIL.

The most effective ways to beat down and keep continually diminishing the lapse-evil are these:

1. Make a *thorough* canvass at the start, so that the person canvassed will, as far as possible, know all you know about the vital need, the substantial value and the great importance to him or her of a life insurance policy. Canvassed in this way, the person canvassed will be grounded in the knowledge and belief that life insurance is a boon, a blessing, a protection well worth the money paid out, rather than something that is not vitally necessary and that can easily be done without. And so the chances are twenty to one that he or she will persist and scout the idea of lapsing.

2. When the canvass is closed and the application is signed—readily and eagerly signed as it is now fairly sure to be, because the signatory has been educated to know and understand and appreciate the benefit he or she has just contracted to secure and enjoy—the canvasser should at once propose advance payments, not for one, but for several weeks' premiums. Almost invariably this has been found to be a great safeguard against lapsing.

3. The next and perhaps greatest means of keeping lapses down to the lowest notch possible is constant, courteous, painstaking, tactful and intelligent care of the debit.

There are other things that could be pointed out as aids in the important work of minimizing the lapse-evil, but the agent who will faithfully and efficiently apply to his work the three things just pointed out will, in our opinion, be a marked and successful man among his fellows, a credit to his district; in short, a model agent, who will of a certainty push to the front, prosper and progress.—Prudential Weekly Record.