

man and keep him in sight until he surrenders" is a motto which every agent might profitably paste in his hat. This kind of perseverance, we need scarcely say, is to be tempered with that kind of discriminating common sense which belongs to adaptation and good judgment. Successful agents have learned that that omnipresence of effort, which becomes a burdensome "bore" to a sensible man, is anything but true perseverance such as wins success. Of quiet, skilful persistence there cannot be too much; but of noisy, I-am-after-you demonstration, there cannot be too little. The bullet which seldom fails to go straight to the mark is sped from the rifle which makes the least noise.

AN UNPLEASANT SURPRISE.

A great many complaints have from time to time been made by the fire insurance companies authorized to transact business in Canada, regarding risks which have been filched from them by unlicensed companies paying no taxes, and having headquarters in the States; but our offices have consoled themselves hitherto with the conviction that this smuggling (for that is what this contraband trade undoubtedly is) would work its own cure, since those companies stooping to this traffic did not belong to the front rank, so to speak, which fact has been occasionally brought home to insurers, who learned by sad experience that "the penny-wise, pound-foolish" plan is not satisfactory in the long run.

We ourselves continually condemned this underground insurance, not only as unfair towards the licensed companies, but also unwise on the part of insurers, believing that stock companies with any pretensions to be considered of A 1 standing would attempt to secure Canadian business in what we cannot help stigmatizing as an underhand as well as an underground manner. We were certainly very much astonished to hear that the company claiming to be "the oldest purely fire insurance office in the world," dating back to 1710, the Sun of London, has been taking risks in Canada through either New York or Boston, the policies bearing the signature of the United States manager, Mr. Guile, so that it may be said in more senses than one, that the Sun differs from a certain Israelite held up to our admiration, and is not without "guile." We can scarcely believe that the home office of the company can be aware of this action of its American representative, because there is no doubt that did the Sun desire to compete for a share of Canadian business, it is both rich and strong enough to do so upon even terms, and could apply for admission at the front door without seeking to pilfer through the back kitchen window. Further, should the Sun not wish to do a general business in the Dominion, but be willing to accept lines upon a few well known risks, it surely is not in such absolute need of business that it not only accepts such risks at less than half the tariff rate, but writes a blanket policy covering building and machinery in one amount!

Our companies here, which conform to the laws, have had much to contend with from their proximity to a

country, where the keen competition among hundreds of offices leads a few to be not too particular how they obtain an income, but we do not remember that our English companies ever before had occasion to exclaim "*et tu brute*," to one of their leading confreres, and we trust that the matter has only to be brought to the attention of the head office in order to have it rectified.

THAT ACCIDENT INSURANCE "REFORM."

In our issue for March 1 we called attention to a quiet meeting of the officers of four or five of the leading accident companies of the United States, to consider policy changes, rates, etc. At that meeting, held in New York, February 12, it was agreed to withdraw from accident tickets and from installment and general policies the "special features" (indemnity for loss of limbs, eyes, etc.) and a second meeting was arranged for one week later at Hartford. At that meeting the elaborate report of a special committee, including a classification of risks with limit of indemnity, was adopted. It was also agreed that after April 1 no new business on preferred, select or class A risks should be written at less than \$25 per thousand. It was also agreed to make a ridiculous division of territory, by fixing as a geographical line the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, the northern line of West Virginia and the southern line of Maryland, and charging engineers and firemen south and west of that line \$22, while those north of the line are to be charged \$18. All these things are stated in the report of the secretary of these meetings, as printed in the *Chronicle of New York*.

Now, as stated in New York correspondence of the *Investigator*, and also by the *Spectator*, the officials of the Fidelity and Casualty company of New York undertake to convey the impression, that although several matters were "under consideration" at the above named meetings, "no decisive action has been taken." All of which is explained by the fact, that when the general Western agent of the above company, Mr. W. A. Alexander of Chicago, who controls a very large business, received the "unanimously adopted" proceedings of the meetings referred to, he wrote the company a scathing letter, and threatened that if the changes adopted were put in force, he would leave the company and take his business elsewhere. The *Chronicle of New York* got hold of this letter, and printed it. Mr. Alexander has been "seen," and a good deal of dust-throwing in the eyes of the public is being attempted.

To us nothing is clearer than that the course taken by this coterie of accident companies was a great blunder, and that if the changes agreed upon are made operative they will have committed a still greater blunder. A very strong and constantly increasing undercurrent of popular feeling has gradually been setting in against the equivocal phrases, evasive conditions, and altogether jug-handle provisions of the policies issued by several accident companies; and that in the face of this significant fact, a retrograde instead of an advance movement should be made is passing strange. The