

HELP IN FIRE INSURANCE BUSINESS

There are few professions of the present day giving more employment, or offering more inducements for rapid advancement than the business of fire insurance. In the City of Montreal alone there are several thousand employees constantly engaged in this one branch of insurance alone, not to speak of the many thousands employed in the various other branches of insurance.

The insurance business in all its lines is a business of specialties, even more than any other professional occupation, and that is especially true of fire insurance, because while there is not much soliciting necessary in this branch of business, it is on the other hand a business in which a highly technical knowledge is a necessity if a person is to become efficient.

The trouble today is (as recently pointed out by a contemporary) that there is a great lack of skilled help in the fire insurance line, and several companies are at once complaining of the lack of men of ability, and are engaged in stealing the help of their neighbors whenever they can bribe by some especially attractive offer an employee of another Company to leave that organization and join their forces.

Such a condition of affairs is to be deprecated from several points of view. It is demoralising; it is not strictly honorable and it leads to inefficiency and lack of loyalty on the part of employees to any one company, and yet loyalty is always a firm necessity to success.

The question therefore arises how to remedy the condition which all admit exists, and that of course, leads primarily to a second question why are there so many persons passing insurance by for some other occupation or profession.

The answer to this latter question can doubtless be answered by the responsible Company officials themselves, in the following manner, with which The Chronicle thoroughly agrees:—there are no training classes in our large schools or colleges, where the student who might like to take up fire insurance, can be educated in that profession, and as there is no Insurance Institute in Montreal, there can be no educational effort in that direction.

On the other hand every life company has classes of its own to train students to become useful life insurance men.

True there were a few insurance classes held last winter, organized and carried on by insurance men connected with the Order of the Blue Goose and while these gentlemen have the best interests of the business at heart, such an effort, to be wholly effectual, calls for the united support of the Company officials generally.

The remedy for the condition of affairs we are

now discussing, unquestionably lies largely with the managers themselves, and if a move were made in the right direction, the majority would no doubt interest themselves to see that classes were established, and in every other way possible encourage proficiency.

INSURANCE INSTITUTES

The educational work of Insurance Institutes is being regarded by company officials with steadily increasing favours. The activity of the Insurance Institute of America in raising funds through the goodwill and active support of the companies for the enlargement of its educational work is generally known.

In Great Britain (the home of insurance) some thirty institutes are doing good work. These are all affiliated with The Chartered Insurance Institute which has offices in London, England, and which by virtue of its Royal Charter grants the degrees of Fellowship (F.C.I.I.) and Associateship (A.C.I.I.) to candidates who pass its examinations.

Many of the most prominent insurance men in Britain have recently been devoting considerable attention to the furtherance of the objects of the Chartered Insurance Institute and from the liberal support which is being given by the companies there, the establishment in London, of a central building from which the activities of the institute will be directed will soon be an accomplished fact.

The studious men of the business are the ones who can be depended upon to utilize the knowledge obtained by their close application in carrying forward the business to even greater achievements, and they will be accorded the consideration which their broader attainments will merit.

British Executives who have visited the Chronicle offices from time to time have expressed surprise that an important insurance centre like Montreal should be without an Institute and that Educational facilities offered elsewhere for the training of the younger men growing up in the business are lacking in Canada's Metropolitan City.

North British & Mercantile Insurance Co.

Mr. Randall Davidson, Canadian manager of the North British & Mercantile, announces the appointment of Mr. Bryce B. Hunter, as second agent to represent the Company in the City of Toronto. Mr. Hunter will take into association with him, from the 1st January next Mr. J. D. Rowell, who has represented the Company for many years as Inspector for Ontario.