

Justifying Agents Commissions

An occasional prospect vents the grievance that his interviewer would receive a sizable commission on the policy offered. Tell him that you receive no salary, that you rely on your industry and ability for an income and that the earnings of the average life insurance agent are no larger than the earnings of the average salesman in any other average line. Tell him also that the commissions which an agent receives are paid out of the entire expense fund of the company and bear only a negligible relation to the cost of the insurance under the individual policy. And remind him that if you were receiving a salary instead of commissions your salary would be, as the commission is, a part of the general expense of the company. The salaries paid to bank officials and other bank employees are elements in the rate of discount his bank charges and he finds no fault with that; nor would he criticise if such officials and other employees were paid commissions instead of salaries, if that were banking custom. The test is, does the remuneration, whether commissions or salary, bear a proper relation to the cost of the service? Insurance departments, in the case of a life insurance agent, have defined the limits of insurance costs for the express purpose of protecting policyholders. Sponge out his grievance by tactfully giving this view of commission payments.

(Mutual Life "Points.")

WHEN IS OLD AGE?

The experience of the world is multiplying to prove that 65 is too early to be taken as a probable retiring age. The vast majority of men at 65 are not too old to work and don't want to stop working. The old-age provisions made by England and Germany for the whole people, and those of the Pennsylvania Railroad, New York Central, Chicago and Northwestern, and a long list of corporations, fix 70 as the age when pensions may begin. Most of them don't require that men shall retire then, but leave it optional with each. The President of the United States the other day declared that the old civil service retirement law, naming age 65 should not be declared compulsory, but voluntary and optional.

Golf and other exercises, dancing and other pastimes, better hygiene and many other causes are beginning to make men more fit when they are old men than they used to be. More than ever men are realizing that it is wholesome to work as long as they can.

Fire Insurance Rates and Fire Losses

Looking the country over as a whole we may observe a curious reaction in human nature. Those who make a profession, or the stepping-stone to

the profession, of "raising hell with fire insurance," invariably do it about fire insurance rates. You never hear them thunder against the vast property and life loss from fires that could be prevented. They never arraign the Government for not adopting and enforcing laws for honest building construction to reduce the susceptibility of fires. They never demand that personal responsibility for fires by carelessness and neglect be visited by personal liability for the result of it.

Not at all! But they keep up a thunderous clamour against the mere insurance rate. The fire loss is always far greater than any insurance can possibly indemnify for by distribution and in addition the whole sum—insurance money and all—is a dead and total loss to the community, yet the hue and cry is raised against the only thing that ameliorates the misfortune of the individual and not a whisper against the high rates of carelessness and neglect that make the insurance rate a simple matter of mathematics.

Litigation Over Capital Call of First National Reinsurance of London

The First National Reinsurance Company of London, which was organized last year, appears to be having some difficulty in collecting the second call on the subscriptions to its shares. In a case recently tried in London, where the subscriber to fifty shares of the stock of the company resisted the call for the second 5s per share, the defendant stated that, unfortunately, he was silly enough to pay the amount of the call, as he would never see his money back, but he disputed the claim in respect of interest and also costs. The defendant testified: "The company is more or less practically a swindle. I cannot sell the shares at any price. They are worth nothing." He lost out on the case, however, and was ordered to pay the amount of the call, with interest and costs.

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