

THE EQUITABLE LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

PEACE REIGNSONCE MORE; TRUSTEES OF HIGH RANK HOLD MAJORITY OF STOCK IN TRUST, BUT HAVE NO VOTING POWER; POLICY-HOLDERS TO ELECT MAJORITY OF THE DIRECTORS; PLAN OF MUTUALIZATION TO BE CARRIED OUT; MR. PAUL MORTON, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, ISSUES AN ENCOURAGING CIRCULAR TO THE AGENTS.

A circular has been issued "To the Agency Force of the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States," signed, "Paul Morton, Chairman of the Board of Directors."

"This circular is an official announcement that an arrangement has been concluded which puts an end to the strife that has been so long maintained respecting the control and the future policy of this great organization.

On the 9th inst., the Board of Directors created the office of Chairman of the Board, which was conferred on Mr. Paul Morton, who accepted it on condition of being given "a free hand as to measures and men." Thereupon, the chief executive officers voluntarily resigned, to take effect, or not, as might appear to be in the best interests of the society and its policy-holders.

The most significant and important change in the situation was caused by Mr. Hyde selling the majority of the capital stock to some prominent policy-holders. In reference to this, Mr. T. F. Ryan announced that he and other policy-holders had made this purchase for the sake of putting an end to the present unfortunate condition of the company's affairs, not only for the interest of the policy-holders, but for the general business interests of the entire community. The purchasers will divest themselves of all voting power and accomplish in substance and effect the plan of mutualization already approved by the Superintendent of Insurance.

Mr. Ryan says:—

"We propose to do this by carrying the stock to a Board of Trustees composed of men of such character as to command universal confidence and having no connection with Wall Street, with power to vote the stock for the election of directors—as to 28 according to the instruction of policy-holders of the society and as to the remaining 24 directors in accordance with the uncontrolled judgment of the trustees.

This will at once accomplish the object of putting the control of the company in the hands of the policy-holders and will eliminate entirely the one man power to which so much objection has been made.

I have already asked ex-President Cleveland, Justice Morgan J. O'Brien, Presiding Justice of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of the State of New York and Mr. George Westing house, of Pittsburg, to act as trustees of this stock. The last two are among the largest policy-holders of the society."

It is highly gratifying to hear that the above

distinguished persons have expressed their willingness to undertake the very grave responsibilities of this trust. By the conveying of the controlling interest in the stock of the Equitable Life to these trustees, to be exercised for the purpose of effecting the plan of mutualization, the policy-holders in future will elect 28 out of the 52 directors, that is, the election of the Directors of the Equitable Life Assurance Society will be entirely in the power of the policy-holders.

Considering the severity of the storm which has raged around this company, the attacks upon its executive officers having come from every side, it is remarkable how steadfastly the policy-holders have resisted the efforts made to "switch" them in other directions. Some few have been moved by their fears to abandon their policies, but the lapses have been very small, and no doubt, in most cases, they will apply for re-instatement now the trouble is over.

It seems to have been generally understood that there was no question at issue relative to, or involving the financial stability of the Society. Unlimited confidence has been displayed in the Equitable possessing assets of sound quality which give it rank as, not merely one of the greatest life insurance offices in the world, but one of the largest financial corporations now in existence.

The wide extent and sacred nature of the interests entrusted to this society, render its affairs a matter of national importance, both to the United States and Canada. The policy-holders have our warm congratulations on this disturbance having subsided and an arrangement effected which has in it the promise of increased strength and popularity to the company and a widening of their privileges by the acquisition of a vote in the election of directors.

The field force of the society, every agent, in the words of Chairman Morton, "is to be congratulated on what is believed to be the complete solution of the difficulties which have temporarily hampered them and arrested their progress in competing for business." In all these felicitations we must heartily join, and express also the eminent satisfaction felt in financial circles over an arrangement that brightens the financial sky.

THE WORLD'S BALANCE OF TRADE.

Last week, the general principles underlying and circumstances controlling the condition known as "The Balance of Trade," were briefly stated. We gave the aggregate imports and exports of Canada from and to the principal countries with which our trade is transacted for the years 1873 to 1904. The most striking features in the table were the several amounts of the excess of British and American imports and of export: brought into and