

of a practical, corrective nature. Accordingly the Fire Underwriters' Association issued a circular inviting suggestions from all quarters for the suppression of the practice. A good many methods were proposed in response and referred to a strong committee, who, after due deliberation, have reported a plan designed to inaugurate a speedy reform. In substance the plan requires that a pledge be signed by at least three-fourths of the members of the Pacific Insurance Union, that monthly reports and remittances of all premiums shall be made by agents on or before the last day of each month following the month in which the policy was issued, and that in case of a failure to so remit and report, a notice shall at once be sent the agent, and in the absence of a satisfactory response a final notice shall be given the assured that the policy is cancelled for non-payment of premiums. A uniform notice to agents is to be used by all the companies. The plan is all right. Its execution is the important thing.

THE OPERATION OF the laws in New York and most other States governing—or, rather, misgoverning—the winding up of life assurance companies is again illustrated. Mr. Henry R. Pierson was, about a dozen years ago, through the favor of the State insurance superintendent and the court having the appointing power, appointed receiver for some half dozen companies altogether. He died in January last insolvent, as it is claimed, and it now transpires, upon the report of the referee appointed to examine his accounts as receiver, that his estate owes the receiver appointed as his successor about \$35,000 belonging to three of the companies he has been trying *not* to wind up since March, 1877. After twelve years of skillful “receiving” on the part of himself and his friends,—under forms of law, of course—during which very little disbursing was done on policyholders' account, \$35,000 were “absorbed,” in addition to the very liberal fees and commissions falling to the receiver's share. We again repeat, that a legal system permitting—in effect encouraging—the delays and pilferings belonging to the life assurance receivership system of the State of New York is a disgrace to civilization.

WE CALLED ATTENTION in our last issue to the arrangement entered into between the members of the British civil service and the North British and Mercantile insurance company, by which the latter undertakes assurance on the lives of the former. In our London letter, on another page, will be found a more extended consideration of the matter which will well repay perusal. As we anticipated, the arrangement referred to calls out a good deal of adverse criticism from all quarters, and the company will doubtless have something to say in explanation. The two specially objectionable features of the agreement seem to us to be the granting to all civil service insurants of a fifteen per cent. commission on all renewal premiums, and the acceptance of applicants without further medical examination. A liberal commission on first premiums could be safely granted, under the circumstances, and

even the minimum renewal allowed to agents might be permissible; but to mortgage the premium income indefinitely to the extent of *fifteen per cent.* would manifestly be a reckless proceeding, if carried out extensively. Then, the medical examinations for entrance to the civil service have very little protective significance. Examinations, by the same medical man, for life assurance and for government service would manifestly be put on very different grounds. The one is merely a question of physical ability to perform certain prescribed duties, the other a question of vitality affecting the average, which is the keystone of the arch on which the strength of life assurance depends. The conscientious examiner appreciates the distinction and acts upon it. Selection against the company is likely to be the result.

IS DEATH BY sunstroke an accidental death? Referring to the case of Dozier against the Fidelity and Casualty company, in our last issue, we said very emphatically that in our opinion it was. To this assertion *Insurance*, our New York contemporary, takes exception, and at great length attempts to prove our opinion to be unsound. We are quite content to await the ultimate decision of the courts on the question, but in the meantime we may suggest that to us the question seems to be a very simple one. All death, except by suicide, is caused either by disease working in the system with gradually destructive tendencies or by extraneous and irregular causes operating unexpectedly, which we call accidental. Cholera or diphtheria may cause speedy death, and are recognized diseases; drowning may cause sudden death and is recognized as accidental. Is sunstroke a disease? Hardly. It is an extraneous cause producing sudden death by paralysis of the vital powers, just as drowning is an extraneous cause producing death by strangulation, or as electricity is an extraneous cause producing death by a lightning stroke. This is the whole case in a nutshell, as we view it; and until *Insurance* demonstrates that sunstroke is a disease, we shall be obliged to place it in the category of accidental causes of death with drowning, suffocation by gas, unintentional poisoning, and sundry other causes having no connection whatever with disease.

AN ARTICLE QUOTED from a daily paper connects *Lloyd's List*, first published as a little two-page sheet in 1726, with *Lloyd's News*, which, it says, was started in 1692 by Edward Lloyd of London coffee-house fame, and of which it says *Lloyd's List* was the successor. On the strength of this statement it is claimed that “insurance journalism, instead of being a mere outgrowth of insurance, was the foundation on which marine insurance was reared,” and that “in two years more will come the 200th anniversary of its birth.” Several of our contemporaries have quoted this article approvingly, under the delusion that they were giving currency to a historic fact, with its deductions; whereas the “facts” stated are not facts at all, and the claim for the antiquity of insurance journalism is ridiculous in the extreme. The fact is, that *Lloyd's News* was