

questions were addressed with regard to the general state of health of the applicant, the nature of any serious illness, suspicion of any organic affection, any injury, his habits, and constitution. That was apparently the first time the society deemed it prudent to retain the services of a physician to aid them in the sifting of cases. It would thus appear that, coincident with the advance in medical science and the spreading of the knowledge of more precise means of physical diagnosis, the companies sought for and obtained more exact information as to the actual condition of proposers before admitting them to the benefits of their societies. And so the process of selection of the most healthy lives had gone on to this day, each company trying, from time to time, to improve upon the medical forms which were placed before their examiners, in order to obtain as complete and faithful an account of the proposer as possible, both as to his family and personal history, as well as to his physical condition. There existed a popular belief that all that care was of little use, and that the benefits of selection were entirely lost after the first five or six years. Acting on that assumption, companies had been started to accept lives without any medical examination. But, so far as he was aware, they had not proved a success, as one would naturally predicate. For, to them, all the rejected of other offices would, as a matter of course, repair, and the healthy would, equally, as a matter of course, carefully shun their decisions; they had no aggregated groups of persons suffering from the same disorder, though perhaps differing greatly in form, which might supply a basis by which to adjudicate upon the special case before them. And if the extra rates recommended by medical officers had, in the past, saved the offices from loss, he was bound to admit that that happy result had been arrived at without the aid of any scientific formula, and by merely empirical methods.

—*Insurance and Financial Gazette.*

"A REVIEW OF LIFE INSURANCE."

(An able and eloquent address.)

Those of our readers who have been inclined to maintain that in the practical business of life eloquence is "of no account," must have been agreeably surprised when perusing the address of Judge Koon of Minneapolis to the members of the National Association of Life Underwriters. But the "tempest of applause," aroused by the thoughts and language of a celebrated Western judge, has scarcely subsided before the twenty-eighth National Convention of Insurance Officials is heard, expressing delighted approval and pleasure at a masterly Review of Life Insurance, by President McCall, of the New York Life. The address is replete with information, suggestion, and criticism based upon actual knowledge and long experience; but, in closing, Mr. McCall clearly showed that he can supplement the simple and convincing

eloquence of facts and figures with a pretty and poetical tribute to the benefits conferred upon mankind by the profession of which the able President of the New York Life is a leader. Mr. McCall said:—

"I have said so much by way of criticism that I am sure no one will grudge me a paragraph in praise of the benefits which Life Insurance has conferred during the past twenty-seven years. The companies have, during that time, received from policy-holders over three thousand million dollars; they have paid over one thousand millions in death-claims, and nearly as much more in endowments, annuities, dividends and surrender values. It will help us to appreciate the significance of these figures if we compare them with others which more strikingly impress the imagination. A third of a century ago a terrible civil war raged in this country for four years. The number of deaths in the Federal armies is officially stated to have been over 350,000; the National Debt at the close of the war exceeded twenty-seven hundred million dollars; and the Government has since paid in pensions over twenty-one hundred millions. The debt was so great that the Nation's ability to pay it was openly questioned, and our pension legislation has been the most liberal the world has ever seen; yet, since 1871, we have paid out for Life Insurance more than the amount of the National Debt when at its highest point, and the payments of the life companies to their members have nearly equaled the disbursements of the Government on account of pensions. The Nation poured out blood and treasure like water, and laid a heavy burden upon posterity, that it might insure its own integrity and perpetuity; under Life Insurance individuals have freely paid these vast sums that they might insure the integrity and perpetuity of their families, and that their posterity might be free. The patriot who gives his life for his country and the man who insures his life for the protection of his family alike link their being with the future by unselfish devotion to present duty, and though they perish outwardly, they still live

"In minds made better by their presence; live.
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues."

THE CONFLAGRATION AT NEW WESTMINSTER.

New Brunswick, Newfoundland and now New Westminster! From the reports received to date, the principal city of the Fraser River district, in British Columbia, has been reduced by fire to a scene of desolation and ruin. The loss will be heavy; but fortunately the people of New Westminster, the Royal City, are not inclined, in the face of disaster, to sit down and wring their hands in despair. In wiring the news to the *New York Journal of Commerce*, on Monday last, the most significant sentence in a message, telling so grievous a story of loss and suffering, was the following indication of the spirit of those who are making British Columbia the most attractive Province in the Dominion of Canada:—"Already many merchants are starting to build stores and renew business." And this activity was displayed on the day after the disaster.