

SECRETARY REPORTS PROGRESS.

The Secretary, Mr. W. S. Milne, in presenting his first report, congratulated the members of the association on the year's work. Of the 21 associations formed in Canada nineteen had reported. All had paid their dues to the Federal body up to June 1, 1907, and were in good standing. He acknowledged the valuable work done by the Hon. President, Mr. T. G. McConkey, Toronto, in the West and British Columbia, but regretted to draw attention to the apparent apathy displayed in the Province of Manitoba towards the movement. He urged the desirability of taking steps to arouse their brethren in the Prairie Province to a greater sense of the importance of the organization. The report was adopted.

GENERAL AGENT AND HIS WORK.

An interesting address was delivered by C. Jerome Edwards, president New York Life Underwriters' Association on The General Agent and his Work. The Armstrong committee had apparently regarded the general agent as an excrescence who was a parasite upon the man in the field, and the assured alike. This was unjust. The agent in the field could not keep up the required enthusiasm unless he could have stimulus and sympathetic encouragement from his general manager or general agent. The general agent was a perpetual fount of enthusiasm.

MR. B. HAL BROWN ON MOTIVES AND IDEALS.

An able paper on Motives and Ideals was given by Mr. B. Hal Brown, F.S.S., of Montreal, general manager of the London & Lancashire Life Insurance Company in Canada.

In introducing Mr. Brown, the president referred to him as "one of the Nestors of life insurance in this country," and one of the originators and charter members of the Insurance Institute of Montreal.

The speaker divided men into three classes.

"Here are men who are honestly and efficiently discharging the duties which lie nearest their hand. At the same time there are to be found everywhere too, men like destructive parasites existing upon the result of toil of others, sapping the vital energy of the workers in every sphere of life. Others there are who belong to a class between the two, apparently busily employed, but restless withal and unhappily disturbers of the even flow of commendable prosperity. In this class I would place fanatics, agitators and unprincipled labor demagogues of the type that live by the promotion of ill-feeling and disturbance between labor and capital."

The cause for these conditions Mr. Brown stated to be "a lack of character in those responsible for results. Too much motive and too little ideal. The evil may never wholly disappear, but we look for improvement." Having emphasized the importance of character and urged the need of lofty ideals, Mr. Brown declared that life insurance, above all other lines of business, required in its conduct the highest integrity. He wished his hearers to regard life insurance as the very highest vocation, and, therefore, worthy to have laid upon its altar the best abilities and to command the most devoted service. Too much praise, he thought, could not be given to the efforts which had produced a life Underwriters' Association such as Canada could now boast of, and he considered the organization should be encouraged

and assisted by the companies in a tangible manner.

"Unquestionably many known evils must and will be rooted out. I believe that much will be done to develop the best that is in each individual member; that sordid motives can find no place in the minds of the leaders or in the conventions that are held; but on the contrary lofty ideals will fill an exalted place, and though repeated partial failures may be chronicled, success must ultimately crown faithful effort."

In closing the speaker referred to the characteristic trait ascribed to the British Bull Dog, tenacity of purpose and firmness of grip, and spoke of it as worthy of emulation, quoting the striking words of Robert Collyer:

"Winning by inches, holding by clinches.

Strong to contention and slower to quit;

Now and then failing, but never once quailing,

Let us thank God for our Saxon grit."

THE DIGNITY OF LIFE INSURANCE.

Mr. A. S. McGregor, London, dealing with "The Dignity of Life Insurance," said there were many indications that the public were losing confidence in the methods by which a large percentage of business was secured. The public at large did not know too much about the business, but when it dawned upon them that one person was purchasing his insurance at least for the first year much less than his neighbor, who frequently was better able to pay the larger rate they concluded that the guardian was not true to his trust. They should seek to prevent any company, directly or indirectly, by its agents or otherwise, from selling its insurance for less than the regular price unless the insurance was not worth 100 cents in the dollar, and even then they should be compelled to sell it to the poor man as well as to the rich. He held that the dignity of the profession was lowered by some of the offices and many of the agents, directly and indirectly, adopting such practices.

PRACTICAL ETHICS.

Mr. A. H. Vipond, Montreal, discussed "Field Ethics" in a short paper, in which he pointed out that during the darkest hours when criticism was most severe the field man stood out the freest from censure. He contended that their ethics should be higher than those of any other profession because of the nature of their work, and pointed out some of the considerations which should weigh with them from the personal, public and competitive points of view. He especially emphasized the need of honesty in their dealings with the public.

CRITICIZED THE BANKS.

Mr. W. J. Bell, of Guelph rode his bank-criticism hobby and drew attention to what he considered the inferiority of Canadian banking conditions as compared with those obtaining in the business of life insurance. He stated that he had spent fifteen years of his life in foreign countries and had no hesitation in saying that he thought the Canadian Bank laws were by no means as perfect as the bankers would have them believe. These bank laws seemed to him in more need of amendment than the insurance laws. He believed that insurance companies offered better security for the return of any money entrusted to them than did any of the Canadian banks.