

should be to remedy this condition by securing adequate premiums and by reducing expenses to a minimum. But the contrary is the fact. Competition is the basis for the underwriting, and the same influence is responsible for the high commissions now being paid on this class of business. There can be no justification for a commission in excess of 15 per cent. to brokers, and perhaps a slight increase over that rate to agents, but in no event should the total commissions exceed 20 per cent. This department will insist upon the companies conducting their liability business upon a sound basis and in particular as follows:

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S REQUIREMENTS.

First—Basing their underwriting upon statistical experience and the physical and moral hazard of each individual risk and free from the influence of competition.

Second—Commissions not to exceed the percentages stated above.

Third—Administration expenses to be minimized.

If it is found, through examination or otherwise, that any of the authorized companies of other States are transacting their business contrary to the above recommendations, and in such a manner as to jeopardize the interests of their assured, I will not hesitate to use the power vested by law in the Superintendent of Insurance to revoke the certificate of authority of any such company whenever, in my judgment, such revocation will best promote the interests of the people of this State.

If it is found, through examination or otherwise, that any of the domestic companies are continuing such practices this department will, through publicity and other means, call the attention of the insuring public to the character of the protection such company is affording.

If it becomes necessary this department will seek through legislation further means for the protection of the insuring public.

THE SELLING OF LIFE INSURANCE: A MAN'S JOB.

Why is it a difficult matter to sell life insurance? Because men are fundamentally selfish. The successful life insurance agent has to be an example of the highest type of salesmanship. He has to go the whole programme of arousing the interest, creating the desire and securing the active consent. Compared with selling life insurance, selling automobiles ought to be like taking taffy from a tadpole, for everybody is interested in the atrocious things, ninety-nine out of every hundred want one, so that the selling of a motor car resolves itself into merely a bit of prospecting to see if the willing victim can produce sufficient pay-dirt to cover the price. Prospective automobile purchasers deliberately enter the automobile salesrooms in flocks and submit themselves to the full and unobstructed attack of the salesman. They even ask for the gaily printed literature on the subject, and they permit themselves to be whirled about the city in a sample car on a sample ride, and in every possible way place themselves wholly at the mercy of the salesman. "Salesman!" No, it is unfair to dignify that individual with the title. He is not a salesman; he simply is the at-present seemingly necessary human factor in the programme of the transaction. A nickle-in-the-slot,

automatic, cash register outfit, tuned up to be able to recognize the bankability of a thousand-dollar check would answer just as well, and some ingenious mind may soon invent this expense-saving device and throw a lot of so-called salesmen out of their jobs. The buyer of an automobile has sold himself long before he makes the acquaintance of an automobile agent, and he becomes ripe for picking when the resistance of his financial conscience is finally overcome and he is able to produce the coin, to do which he will mortgage anything he may possess and for which the money lender may have a dollars-and-cents respect.

A CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

But how about the life insurance salesman? How many self-sold prospects does he encounter in a day or a month or a year? How many hungry-eyed buyers come into his office and ask for bundles of literature and sample policies? So few, indeed, and so rare are such kindly smiles of providence that a life insurance agent may live through his several decades of usefulness and never once be subjected to the shock of such an experience. That such things do ever happen many of the most credulous openly doubt, and it is a severe test of a life insurance salesman's reputation for veracity for him to undertake to recount such an experience in the presence of seasoned members of his profession.

That it is hard to sell life insurance because men are fundamentally selfish is also the reason that it is easy to sell automobiles. The hardest part of the battle in making a sale is thus fought out for the automobile dispenser, while with the life insurance salesman, if he manages to get within sight of the man he is after, he is greatly encouraged; then if he succeeds in securing an interview without getting kicked out, he congratulates himself on having awakened the man's interest, and if, on top of all this, he stirs something to the surface that resembles desire he mentally begins to spend the commission he then considers cinched. All this preliminary of interest and desire the automobile man knows nothing of, but with the life insurance salesman it is at least 80 per cent. of the battle. According to this authentic line of calculation, therefore, the life insurance salesman is ten times as good a salesman as the so-called automobile salesman. Q. E. D.

SELF-SELLERS.

What is true of the automobile is true of many other forms of pleasure and diversion for which the American people are squandering their good money and then complaining about the high cost of living and the impossibility of getting ahead. The theatres advertise, but they do not need to. Baseball parks are filled without the necessity of serving court subpoenas; auto and horse races will draw the last sou out of the pockets of speed maniacs by the tens of thousands; the silk mills run overtime; the breweries and distilleries enlarge their plants and brag of making cities famous; prize fights are gold mines for the promoters; steamship reservations for European trips have to be made months in advance; de luxe hotels can be found in every desert for the entertainment of a restless mob of money-wasting tourists; new sensations and new thrills have a quickly realizable market value.