

placement of the bowels, from which cause he died next day. The widow and son sued to recover under the policy, claiming death from accident, and the court adjudged for the plaintiffs. In reversing this judgment the Lord-President of the Court of Sessions said, that in order to recover, death must have resulted from violent, accidental and external means, and that inasmuch as there was not shown to have been any external or violent means used in the ordinary act of pulling on his stockings of an accidental kind, the company could not be held liable. The act of the insured was an ordinary voluntary act, and the result, though perhaps unusual, could not be attributed to accidental means.

THE ABSURD TALK about life insurance being a game in which one must "die to win," which used to be so flippantly indulged in, is growing less and less common, and no longer heard among observant and really intelligent men. The fact is becoming recognized, that in true life insurance there is less of the element of chance than in almost anything else in the world, and as to dying there is no chance whatever, save that of the particular time when the event may occur. Everybody, insured or uninsured, must alike die, and prudent forethought with reference to that unalterable fact is quite as sensible as to anticipate next week's empty meal tub or next winter's empty coal bin. Frail wife and helpless children are to be fed and sheltered whether the husband and father lives or dies. When he insures his life for their benefit he is simply buying for them in advance that raiment, food and shelter which his present daily labor provides. *He* does not "win" anything by dying excepting gratitude for his thoughtful care and the favor of heaven, though his wife and children certainly do escape the poor-house where the family of his neighbor has gone who smartly refused to enter a game where he had "to die to win!"

MR. PLIMSOLL, who has long devoted himself to the improvement of the condition of the British sailor, has lately stated some very important facts before the Royal Labor Commission of London as the result of his investigations into the mortality prevailing among sailors. He asserts that the loss of life on British ships is four times as great as it is on the vessels of any other nation. Among other probable causes of this condition of affairs, he points out that, from lack of adequate inspection of the food supply furnished vessels, unsuitable and bad rations are frequently furnished, that many sailors die for want of suitable nutrition, and that over loaded decks are common. The most significant feature of Mr. Plimsoll's report, however, is found in the pretty plain intimation given, that many lives are sacrificed by vessel owners through over-insurance, by which they scheme to make fraudulent gain, and one case is cited where a vessel which could not be sold for £7,000 was insured for £16,000. However little or much there may be in this view of the case, it is certain that over-insurance is too common, and a thorough investigation by competent authority is every way to be desired.

THE RECENT ANNUAL statement of the Gresham Life of England, which is one of the leading and most progressive of the English offices, under its actuary and manager, Mr. Thos. G. Ackland, and its able secretary, Mr. James H. Scott, contains a very significant statement made by its chief medical officer. Though it is very prosperous and has made liberal gains in the elements of strength for several years, the mortality for the last two years (the report is to June, 1891) has been higher than the calculation, owing to influenza and its direct results. The medical adviser said of these deaths, that "the excess had been produced by causes over which medical selection was powerless—namely, influenza and diseases induced by it. The society had paid £52,700 for deaths caused directly by influenza. Comparing this disease with cholera, he found, on searching the death register of the society that it had paid during the forty-three years of its existence £22,300 for cholera, and that during that period there had been more than a score of years in which cholera had been an epidemic in some European country in which the society transacted business; therefore they would see that influenza had cost the society two and a-half times more in two years than cholera had done in forty-three years." Taken in connection with the wide-spread influenza mortality since June last, the date of the report, something of the extent to which this mysterious disease has adversely affected all life companies may be inferred, for the Gresham's experience doubtless fairly indicates an experience which is general.

THE NEW YORK LIFE TO THE FRONT.

When in our last issue we predicted that the outcome of the investigation into the affairs of the New York Life by the Insurance Department of New York would be the retirement of President Beers, together with sundry changes in the past methods of management, we did so with a confidence that has speedily been justified by facts. Mr. Beers has resigned, and retires from responsible connection with the company. His successor has been elected, and plans adopted by the trustees for a proper division of labor and responsibility among the officers, such as afford a safeguard against faulty judgment or intentional irregularity.

We congratulate the policyholders on the happy adjustment of affairs by the trustees, who by their action have given evidence of being able to comprehend the real position in which the Insurance Superintendent's report placed the company, and as having the firmness to apply a speedy remedy. The facts concerning the management, as set forth impartially in that report, while not necessarily involving President Beers or his associates in the management in any intentional wrong doing, or in profiting by the irregularities specified, yet clearly showed the prevalence of such loose methods in the agency department and such injudicious investments and expenditures elsewhere as to impair the confidence of the public in the general conduct of the company. The loss of public confidence is peculiarly fatal to the success of a life insurance institution, and, as we predicted, Mr. Beers as well as the trustees was brought