

best be accomplished is a matter which only experience can determine. Some of the industrial life insurance companies, it is understood, are using some of their superintendents as lay examiners. That is, instead of having an applicant medically inspected the opinion of the superintendent as a business man is asked respecting the risk. Persons charged with passing on the merits of applicants for employment, unconsciously perhaps, consider their physical aspects, and if the applicant does not look particularly strong he is rejected, and it is on that principle that the companies referred to are now working. This plan might work out to some extent in the health and accident field, and is merely submitted as a suggestion. Another method is that involving the services of a travelling inspector, who should visit the several agencies, without previous notice, and thoroughly inspect the debits. He would see the insured personally, and ascertain if he or she fitted the answers made in the application, especially as to occupation and previous condition of health. Such an inspector would also act as a deterrent effect upon the agent, in that the latter would never know when the inspector was to visit him; and while we all admit that the great majority of men are honest, yet it is equally true that many are kept honest only by the fear of being found out. An inspection of all risks accepted could be accomplished by such a plan, and it would bring far greater returns than to wait until the insured becomes a claimant.

MANY CIRCUMSTANCES TO BE CONSIDERED.

It would seem hardly necessary to say anything here as to the value of inspections when claims are made, inasmuch as every claim of necessity implies an investigation. In handling large numbers of claims, however, there are many varying circumstances to be considered, and careful scrutiny must be given to each case, no matter whether the amount is trifling or up to the limit. Agents entrusted with the settlement of claims should use every care to protect the interests of the company by making close inspection, and at such times should forget their own interests as agents. Independent inspections of claimants, through a bureau which specializes in that direction, as you all understand, have fully proved their worth and been the means of saving the companies thousands of dollars on fraudulent claims, while the cost is infinitesimal compared with the salvage which results.

On the question of inspecting physicians who may be used at different times, about the same remarks apply as to agents. Other associations than yours have found that there are physicians who are not irreproachable and have done much to curtail their operations through a system of close inspection.

The Dominion Trust Company has offered this week in London 5 per cent. guaranteed first mortgage investment certificates, running three, five or seven years, the proceeds to be invested in revenue-producing property in Canadian cities.

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The late Sir George Ross since 1905 had been president of the Manufacturers' Life, where his shrewd business judgment and capacity were much appreciated.

PRUDENTIAL TRUST'S ANNUAL STATEMENT.

The annual statement of the Prudential Trust Company of Montreal for 1913, shows net profits of \$61,731, after deduction of costs of management, etc. With a balance forward of \$4,002, there was a total sum available of \$65,733. This was appropriated as follows:—dividend for first half of year at rate of 5 per cent., \$11,854; dividend for second half of year at rate of 7 per cent., \$17,815; reduction of organization expenses, \$5,000; depreciation of office building, \$5,000; depreciation of furniture, etc., \$2,000; commission paid on stock less premium received, \$350; transferred to contingent fund, \$23,713.

The general statement shows total assets and liabilities of \$1,356,931.72, as compared with \$1,138,993.83 at the end of the previous year. Among the principal assets were the mortgages, debentures and stocks of other companies representing a total of \$305,021.49, as compared with \$256,311.80 at the end of the previous year; time and call loans \$740,678.30, as compared with \$555,971.12. Trust and agency funds, held for investment, at the end of the year stood at \$2,066,772.68.

Mr. B. Hal Brown, president and managing director, in submitting the report of the board of directors, said. "Activity has characterized all departments during the year and continues into the year now current. Very satisfactory results have attended the transaction of important business which has been entrusted to the officials for attention. The funds at the disposal of the board have been well employed and sufficient has been produced to provide for the payment of the contingent liability referred to in the last annual report, to declare a dividend at the rate of 7 per cent. for the last half year, on the paid-up capital stock and to carry forward the handsome sum shown in the general statement."

FIRE MARSHAL IN ONTARIO.

There has been introduced into the Ontario legislature this week Government legislation for the establishment of a fire prevention department, consisting of a fire marshal with a staff of deputies.

The fire insurance companies will have the pleasure of bearing the expense of this department. A tax of one-third of one per cent. of the gross premiums received by them on their business in Ontario during the preceding year will be imposed.

By what process of reasoning the Ontario Government has come to the conclusion that the fire companies are the right parties to charge with the cost of this new department does not appear. In any case the provision is grossly unfair. Since the whole province will benefit by the work done by the new department, the cost of it should be made a charge upon the provincial revenues at a whole and not merely collected from those who have the sense to pay fire insurance premiums.

A bill has been introduced into the Nova Scotia legislature incorporating the Nova Scotia Tramways & Power Company, Ltd., which is to purchase the Halifax Electric Tramway and the Nova Scotia Light & Power Company. Halifax Electric is controlled largely by Montreal Tramway's interests.