

INSURANCE MATTERS.

SICKNESS INSURANCE.

Considering the pressure at which we live, and all the circumstances of this fiercely competitive age, few things seem to us more desirable than the means of insurance against sickness. Health or sickness insurance is by no means a new element in underwriting; although it is attracting so much attention at the present time. Long ago insurance managers found it a most difficult problem to solve, and quietly laid it aside. Its revival at this date is the direct outcome of excessive competition, and an overpowering desire for volume of premiums. The actual experience in this country in dealing with sickness from an insurance standpoint is very limited; and it is doubtful if any one company now engaged in this business in Canada, or in the United States, has sufficient experience from which to determine true loss ratios and adequate rates, as no form of underwriting presents more difficult problems than that of sickness. Many of the fraternal societies operating in Canada have, for a number of years, made a specialty of sickness insurance, but they do not proclaim their experience in this department. The I. O. F., the largest "fraternal," maintains a discreet silence in regard to this feature of its work. The moral hazard in sickness insurance is difficult to provide for. Accident companies have to take unusual precautions, since dishonest claimants have been known to disfigure themselves so as to collect a few hundred dollars.

Known quantities are not insurable. The unknown and unexpected only are proper subjects for insurance. Some people are seldom if ever sick, and they know it. Their unknown quantity or chance of loss of time seems to be from accident or from sporadic diseases, that may be not improperly called, the accidental diseases. Does the individual man know his tendency to sickness from his past experience? Doubtless there are many men with such knowledge. Men suffering from no particular diseased condition ascertainable by medical examination, but men whose vital forces seem to wear out every year or two, and who must lay up for repairs. Nature calls a halt, and the doctor, his medicines, and rest are needed to restore such people to their normal condition. Such a condition is more or less a known quantity.

Such men will naturally seek sickness insurance. People get educated in the making of claims. They learn the requirements, and they fit their proofs to the end in view. Reputable men have been known to claim disability who have not lost a day from their business, because of a slight attack of illness. There are certain things which the cleverest doctors are apt to be deceived about, unless they suspect something wrong and play the detective. Rheumatism is one of these. A man familiar with the phenomena of rheumatism as described to him by his friends, may never have felt a twinge himself, and yet be able to narrate his symptoms and sufferings in fullest detail to the examining physician. A man well posted on the symptoms of dyspepsia, spinal disorders, lumbago, and the like, can simulate the disability of these and kindred complaints and defy the skill of the physicians. Again, a man is taken sick with one of the hundred and one "ills that flesh is heir to" and is confined to his bed for ten days or two weeks. When he is able to resume work, he finds that work is scarce and wages are low, much lower than the weekly indemnity under his sickness policy. Now the chances are that his attending physician will advise him not to venture out for some time, at least a week, perhaps longer, as he is unfit for work, and he will be taking long chances, in fact acting against his own best interests. In view of the existing low wages he will have no difficulty in persuading himself that the doctor is right. In the face of the doctor's advice, how can the examining physician say anything to the contrary, although he may have his suspicions that the claim is exorbitant. No just and honest claim should be resisted, but against an unjust and dishonest claim should be arrayed, the strong purpose, the best skill and all the resources at command. There is a degree of odium in resisting any claim however fraudulent. Still the duty remains. If the dishonest and tricky were to have their own way in the collection of unfounded claims there would soon be an end of the business. One of the liveliest and most trenchant ques-

WINNIPEG PRICES CURRENT

GROCERIES

Prices to retail dealers for ordinary lot, with usual discounts for cash or large lots.

Table listing various grocery items such as Apples, Peaches, Raisins, and other produce with their respective prices per case or per unit.

Dried Fruits

Table listing various dried fruit items such as Raisins, Apples, and other dried goods with their prices per pound.

Tobacco

Table listing various tobacco products such as Camel, Double Happiness, and other brands with their prices per pound.

DRUGS

Table listing various drug items such as Alum, Alcohol, and other medicinal products with their prices per pound.

LEATHER

Table listing various leather goods such as Harness, Saddle, and other items with their prices per pound.

FUEL

Table listing various fuel items such as Coal, Wood, and other energy sources with their prices per ton.

ions agitating the minds of Canadian underwriters is that of sickness insurance. What is likely to be the outcome of that branch of underwriting in this country is a question of ever increasing importance. The sickness policy is, in its very sale, a bid against the known tendency of disease: it is insuring the intangible many times, both as to the value of the time alleged to be lost and whether the case is real or simulated. We neither predict or prophecy as to the success of sickness insurance, the problem is one solely for the future. If good, the people will in time accept it, if found otherwise they will in time reject it, and in this as in all else effecting the welfare of the race. It is safe to trust the good sense of the people. The danger, if any, will come from excessive competition tending to liberalization, beyond the limits of that prudence which should control the business. Managers understand that for the safety of the great interests that are under their

care they must be on the alert to prevent the unscrupulous schemes of those who look with greedy and covetous eyes upon the companies funds.—Money and Risks.

Neither life insurance people, nor the people who buy life insurance protection, have heretofore understood that an "ordinary life policy" is one that provides that the entire premium for the first year is to be confiscated; that is to say, that the policy in question is to be treated during the first year as term insurance, which is to say, they do not understand that the full premium on an "ordinary life policy" is to be collected by the companies for term insurance. Neither do they understand in the event of that policy being maintained in force by the policyholder for twenty years, that it is to be credited with but nineteen years' reserve. If the companies want to combine term

and whole-life in one policy they know how it can be done. Such a policy, when offered, should be represented for just what it is, at the proper rates, and not as a whole-life or endowment, as the case may be, at the uniform rates charged for whole-life and endowment. Collecting whole-life rates, in which is included a charge for a heavy reserve, and then treating that policy during its first year as a term policy, crediting no reserve to it, renewable at the end of the year as a whole-life policy at the same rate, smacks more of sharp practice than fair and open dealing. Technical and cleverly-written dissertations in defence of such a practice cannot successfully dispose of the poor mortality it embraces. Certain it is, no man buying life insurance protection is going to pay full life or endowment rates for term insurance if he knows it. It as certainly follows then, that the only way such policies can be disposed of is by deluding and deceiving applicants.—The Vindicator.