

prosperity of the life companies would be truly phenomenal, and policy holders could be given dividend or rebate returns that would remind them of the banner days of life insurance thirty years ago.

The evils complained of have been prolific of numberless minor consequent and necessary disadvantages. We will, however, only refer to one of them—the enhancement of the mortality rate. The immutable laws that govern life insurance should and would cause this element to gradually increase; but under careful business methods it would still be far more widely removed from the actual table mortality rate than it really is. It is still not high enough to be in any sense alarming, but it is certainly higher than it need or ought to be: and correct principles, if persistently followed and adhered to, in spite of all obstacles, would surely result in its reduction.

The increase of this item comes from three causes: The first, the gradual raising of the average age of the insured, is unavoidable, the second, the increase of the physical hazard; and the third, the growing moral hazard, are certainly, to some small degree at least, fairly controllable, and *should* be controlled by every legitimate means. The number of those upon whose lives the extreme individual limit of risk is written is gradually becoming an increasing proportion of the total number of insured risks. We have endeavored in an earlier contribution to show how inevitably these risks are enhanced by the mental strain involved in heavy financial responsibilities. Their proportion is a growing one, because these risks are sought, and found, in the densest centres of population; and the evil of over-centralization is largely responsible for this injurious effect, because it brings in less risks from the more sparsely settled districts.

Under a system by which a few individuals control all the business of a large life insurance company, while the bulk of that business is solicited by thousands of men who never come into personal contact with the good influences that emanate from the home office, a gradual lowering of the moral tone and physical excellency of the business may surely be logically predicted. Indeed, we should be amply justified in expressing unbounded surprise if such a result did not follow. The healthful, restraining influences of the home office officials must be felt if a conscientious discharge of the sub-agents' duties is expected—otherwise, it is utterly unreasonable to look for it, or to expect to find it exist in any safe measure. The managing agents who are given supreme control over vast extents of territory become collecting mediums for the transmission to the home office, of applications secured by men, more or less distant from their own centres of business operation, and such managing agents have it not in their power to exercise over such business that measure of careful selection and supervision that is needed to ensure the good and valuable quality of the work.

Next to the irrational system which now governs the compensation of agents I believe this too great centralization of the business is responsible for more troubles than any other evil from which we suffer. Indeed, we

regard it as simply impossible to estimate the extent of this danger, or the loss that it ultimately entails upon us. We believe that no radical and lasting remedy can be applied without breaking down this system of centralization that has been carried to such an extreme. Undoubtedly it is an evil that will be very hard to rectify. It is an abuse that has unfortunately been allowed to take deep root; and its correction, if attempted, will for a time involve considerable derangement, and doubtless much inconvenience. The end sought to be attained would, however, very fully justify the means that it would be necessary to employ; and we very earnestly commend this subject to the consideration of practical and thoughtful life insurance men. They will surely find that they are grappling with a foe worthy of the steel, and we believe their studious thought, applied to so important a matter, would result in inestimable benefit to the business.

#### FIRE LOSSES IN CANADA FOR JUNE, 1895.

DATE. 1895	LOCATION.	RISK.	TOTAL LOSS.	INSURANCE LOSS.
June 2	Montreal.....	Cooper's Shop....	\$ 3,500	\$ 2,700
" 2	Hamilton.....	Pork factory.....	22,000	20,000
" 4	Woodstock.....	Stores.....	15,000	11,000
" 4	Arnprior.....	Steamer.....	15,000	15,000
" 7	Quebec.....	Dwelling.....	1,500	1,500
" 8	Bergerville.....	Dwellings.....	10,000	6,000
" 8	Kinnmount.....	do.....	4,000	4,000
" 10	Pikington.....	Barns.....	2,000	1,700
" 10	Welland.....	Stores.....	1,700	1,700
" 10	Fraserville.....	do.....	10,000	6,600
" 12	Guelph.....	Dwelling.....	3,000	1,900
" 1	Skeena River, B.C.	Cannery.....	40,000	33,000
" 13	Shoal Lake.....	Dwelling.....	1,500	1,500
" 18	Norwich.....	Stores.....	1,600	1,600
" 17	Peterboro.....	Dwelling.....	4,500	3,900
" 17	Montreal.....	Store.....	1,000	1,000
" 7	Fraser River, B.C.	Cannery.....	30,000	21,000
" 18	Strathroy.....	Soda Water Fty.	1,000	1,000
" 20	Chesley.....	Feed Store.....	1,000	1,000
" 18	Tottenham.....	Conflagration.....	70,000	35,000
" 17	Quebec.....	Machine Shop..	2,500	2,500
" 16	Kenilworth.....	Hotel.....	5,000	2,100
" 20	Montreal.....	Type Foundry..	1,000	1,000
" 13	Midland.....	Waggon Shop..	1,200	1,000
" 24	Chatham.....	Fanning Mill Factory.....	30,000	17,000
" 25	Carleton, N.B.	Hotel & Stores..	6,000	3,500
" 30	Montreal.....	Printers.....	1,200	1,200
" 30	Guelph.....	Dwellings.....	2,500	1,000
" 26	St. Hilaire.....	Hotel.....	20,000	nil
" 24	Tp. Woodhouse..	Barns.....	1,200	1,000
" 28	Lynedoch.....	Flour Mill.....	2,000	1,000
Totals.....			\$510,900	\$205,100
Add 20 per cent. for unreported losses and losses under \$1000.....			62,180	40,620
			\$573,080	\$245,720

#### SUMMARY FOR SIX MONTHS.

	1894.		1895.	
	Total Loss.	Insurance Loss.	Total Loss.	Insurance Loss.
For January.....	\$400,560	\$323,520	\$1,970,760	\$1,438,280
" February.....	718,560	531,620	1,543,320	400,920
" March.....	422,400	250,500	1,073,760	880,560
" April.....	895,680	504,720	823,800	246,960
" May.....	693,840	447,720	457,880	246,240
" June.....	631,440	417,840	373,080	245,720
	\$3,831,480	\$2,317,020	\$6,241,800	\$3,245,680