

THE INSURANCE CHRONICLE

WORK OF LIFE AGENTS.

It may be worth while, as a change from pointing out so often the positive means that may be used to become a successful life canvasser (solicitor, the United States people call it) to mention some things that a young man ought not to do. For example, a life canvasser employed by a good company and making a fair living is practically his own master. Being his own master, he is often tempted to "take a day off," or to shorten his hours of work. This temptation is not to be too easily yielded to. It not only lessens his income, but it helps to form an easy-going disposition, which is the misfortune of many.

Again, he is beset by the temptation to stop in the house because of some slight indisposition, and yields to it. Or he encounters a difficulty, whether domestic or commercial, and allows himself to be "knocked out" by it for the day. Anyhow, his ardor for work is chilled and he loafs for half a day. This is poor business; unfair to the company, unjust to himself. No man always feels up to the mark. If every one gave in to feelings of lassitude, to a slight headache, the work of the world would not be done. Here is where the man of spirit and resolution gets ahead of the molly-coddle or the slouch. The man fights and conquers the disposition to yield, the desire for a rest, and as a rule presently forgets his trouble or his pain.

Not every one knows the virtue there is in associating with other people when he is tired or losing hope. If the other fellow cannot strike fire from one, one may quite unexpectedly strike fire out of him and get a fresh start. His cheery word will often raise eyes from the ground and teach one to look up and look ahead instead of back. This is true with respect to many business men, but especially likely to be true with a life assurance canvasser.

A matter that often wastes an agent's valuable time is the giving of disproportionate attention to planning petty schemes which do not pay. An United States writer, Mr. R. S. Goldsbury, hits off this mistake very well:—

"Many an agent will work at his desk till 11.30 a.m. carefully preparing a list. First: A man up in Harlem whom he heard was engaged. Second: A man down at the Battery whose wife's brother used to know his father's friend. Third: A young fellow over in Williamsburg who has had his salary raised, etc. Then the agent starts out. The first is away. The second is over age and over weight. The third is a poor risk or doesn't believe in insurance. The day is wasted. That's no way to do business. Why should the three cases just mentioned be any better to see than three men next door? Is there any advantage in talking to a man you've been introduced to over ten men you have never heard of before you saw their names on the door?"

The man who likes to have things made easy for him, and probably some others, would answer Mr. Goldsbury's last question with: "Yes; I think there is an advantage in an introduction every time." In the more free-and-easy United States, a canvasser, feeling that he is just as good as any and every other man, thinks himself privileged to talk to Mr. Otherman as long as ever he will listen. At any rate, many agents, even in Canada, build too much upon introductions or old acquaintanceships, and do not make out of them as much as they expect.

To recur now to the series of papers by Mr. Arthur Tipping, of Belfast, on the subject of the employment and treatment of life agents, there is a "don't" for companies in one of his articles which ought to be emphasized. Many companies, he says, write each quarter of the year, notifying their general agencies that a certain fixed amount of business is expected to be sent in from their territory. Such notices are followed up, from time to time, by letters calling attention to the amount of the allotment, the portion of it yet to be sent in, commending those who have exceeded the due proportion of the allotment and urging redoubled diligence upon those who have fallen behind. "Sometimes, however," the writer adds, "there are well-meant efforts at the home office to help the agents which are, in fact, harmful, because discouraging. The system of business allotments seems to us one which if judiciously used can be made productive of more good work than might be had without it; but sound sense and good judgment, combined with a knowledge of the conditions under which the agency labors, are essential to its successful employment."

THE BRITISH BUDGET AND INSURANCE.

The British Chancellor of the Exchequer, being asked whether the new super-tax on incomes above £5,000 was intended to apply to life insurance companies; and, if so, whether, in view of the resulting encroachment on the bonus allowed to participating policyholders, he would consider whether an exception could be made in favour of such companies, declared that the new super-tax applies only to the incomes of individuals and not to those of insurance companies and other joint stock companies. But it is pointed out, on the other hand, that the 20 per cent. duty (on unearned increment) will press heavily on companies holding large estates. Moreover, as some will fall in value and some will rise, the companies will be taxed periodically on those which rise, without being able to set off the loss on those which fall.

Apart from taxation, however, the British Budget speech is of exceptional interest to the insurance profession because of the large schemes of national moment, which it foreshadows. On this point the Insurance Record, of London, says: "It can no longer be said that State insurance is 'outside the domain of practical politics,' now that a State old age pension system is in operation, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer is considering a scheme of compulsory contributions for pensions, accidents and premature breakdown of health. But a State department conducted on such lines would seriously clash with the beneficent work of the friendly societies and other provident institutions, and it is a grave question whether, by hampering these in their operations and slackening incentive to self-help, the proposed national scheme would not do more harm than good."

INSURANCE COMPANIES IN MANITOBA.

Since the beginning of the year a large number of insurance companies have been granted registration in Manitoba. Up to May 15th twenty companies had obtained registration there.

Here is a list:—Prudential Insurance Company, Newark, N.J., William White, attorney; Protective Association of Canada, Granby, Que., Harry Pollard, attorney; Travelers' Indemnity Company, of Montreal, J. J. Mitchell, attorney;