

THE AETNA

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"MERRY CHRISTMAS."

Postponed Too Long.

A MERCHANT in New York had been singularly prospered in business, escaping the reverses by which so many business men are overtaken, and which baffle the shrewdest foresight and the most patient toil. His good fortune made him naturally self-confident, proud of his own sagacity, and severe in his judgment of others who had failed. He was accustomed to say that every man of enterprise or prudence ought to succeed, and that failure was a proof of incapacity.

All attempts to induce him to guard against future contingencies, by life insurance policies, were met with ridicule. "Why should I subject my money to loss by putting it into unsafe hands? I can use it to better advantage than anybody else. Most of your companies," he would add, "are got up by men who have failed. If they couldn't take care of their own money, they will do no better with other people's. My business will provide for my family better than any life insurance."

In 1870 he was persuaded to join a few men of wealth in a great speculation to build up a town of five miles from the city. He had hitherto been cautious, confining himself resolutely to his own business, and refusing all overtures to venture beyond it. But the first taste of forbidden sweets intoxicated him. Apparent success lured him to similar enterprises, and he soon invested largely in city property and in lands in New Jersey. To friends who warned of possible danger, he only replied, "I know what I am about. I might have been worth millions but for my extreme caution. A little holdiness is essential to the highest success."

The commercial convulsion of 1873 found him ill prepared for reverses. His property was so widely spread that heavy losses were inevitable. But he acted wisely and promptly. His old prudence returned, and with bitter self-reproaches for his folly, he sold, as far as possible, his shares in building companies, and his real estate, though it swallowed up half his fortune. He thought it would be easy to weather the storm with furled sails.

But his time for reverses had come, and failure after failure in houses with large indebtedness began to fill him with alarm. The shrinkage in value and continued losses by bankrupt debtors, brought the first real anxieties of his business life. His views of the worth of insurance changed, and he negotiated two policies of \$20,000 each, de-

termined to secure his family against all peril. The premiums were not paid, though the policies were waiting his call. On the very day when he intended to take them, he received news of the failure of two large houses, involving heavy losses to himself. Such bad tidings, following the mental strain so long endured, brought on an attack of brain fever, confining him to his bed for several weeks. He had scarcely recovered strength to resume business, when pneumonia set in and proved fatal. The premiums were never paid, and the policies were worthless. When the business was closed up, a few fragments remained from the general wreck; and the family, so long accustomed to luxuries, were reduced to comparative penury. If the policies had been in force, they would have been saved many humiliations.

The Survival of the Fittest.

A FEW insurance companies have shared the fall of numerous commercial houses, and have been obliged to close their business. With some exceptions they have protected insurers by giving them policies in other companies. But the new companies have not always been such as the insurers would have chosen; and the failure and the transfer have created dissatisfaction and distrust. It is only natural, perhaps, that the distrust should take a wide range, and involve companies whose solvency is as sure as that of the government itself. In times of panic reason goes to the rear, and suspicion and fear come to the front.

But the momentary alarm will soon pass, and the sober second thought of the people will regain confidence in institutions whose sound principles and wise management ensure permanence. A good insurance company rests on solid foundations. It is not affected by the contingencies which bring disaster to business houses of long standing. It stands secure, when merchants fail, and manufacturers become bankrupt. Young companies, eager to create business and establish a reputation for enterprise, may adopt rash measures, and indulge in extravagant expenses, which are fatal to permanent success. But older companies, which have learned wisdom by experience, and know that a good name is won better by prudence and economy than by daring, are sure, even in times of financial trouble, to add to their resources, and strengthen their position.

There is no occasion for public distrust

of such companies. They are wisely managed, and their security is impregnable. A few companies, that have ventured upon a rash policy, may be obliged to suspend and transfer their policies. But the fittest will survive, and will prove the absolute safety of insurance principles, under the sternest tests. The Ætna gives security to its patrons as trustworthy as the Bank of England.

What to Do in these Hard Times.

REV. H. M. FIELD, D. D., the able and popular editor of the *New York Evangelist*, and brother of Cyrus W. Field, a few months since wrote an extended article upon "Lessons for hard times—mistaken economies—life insurance," in which, after referring to various topics, he adds with impressive force of language and statement:

"There is one other matter about which we venture to make a suggestion. When the times grow harder and harder, and the pinch comes closer and closer, one thing after another has to be sacrificed. Perhaps a man in better times has made provision for his family against the contingency of his being cut off by getting his life insured for one, two, three, or five thousand dollars, so that if he should die suddenly, they might not be left utterly destitute. But when times grow *very* hard, he finds it difficult to pay the premium. By giving it up he can not only be relieved from this obligation, but get a return from the company, what is called a "surrender value," so that instead of paying out anything, he may get back a portion of that which he has already paid in. The temptation is very strong to throw up his policy and let it go. But what is the truest wisdom?

We hesitate very much to give *advice* to anybody. As every hearer knoweth its own bitterness, so every man knows, or ought to know, his own business affairs better than any man can tell him. He knows what he *can* do, and what he *cannot*. He may disregard any suggestion, simply because it is *impossible* to follow it. For that reason we do not advise anybody, but we may without intrusion give the results of our own experience. As our readers well know, we believe in Life Insurance. It has always seemed to us the most ready way—at once the cheapest and the safest—of "keeping an anchor to windward," guarding against those dangers to which we are all exposed and which in an hour may make shipwreck of life, and of all that hangs upon life. For

that reason we have for many years kept twenty-five thousand dollars of insurance on our life.

With some it may be an absolute impossibility to hold on to such a provision, and necessity has no law. But where it is possible, we believe it is at once the cheapest mode of providing for one's family, and the best possible security; and *in these hard times more than ever*, when disaster overtakes so many other forms of investment in which one had trusted, we would hold on to this as a sheet-anchor that will not let go. If this word of caution shall lead any to cling fast to what they were half inclined to sacrifice, or others to seek this form of security against future disaster, we believe that in years to come more than one family will have cause to thank us for this timely warning."

Life Insurance in the Work of Benevolence.

WITHIN a few months the following item appeared in a western paper:

"As an instrument by which a life can be in part devoted to the securing of a noble object, life insurance is a peculiarly applicable facility. "No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself," and therefore Mr. Charles J. Hull, of Chicago, has assigned to Oberlin College a \$25,000 life insurance policy, payable at his death, for the endowment of a professorship, in that institution in memory of his deceased daughter."

It was also stated after the death of the lamented Gov. Buckingham of Connecticut, that he left a policy of \$1,000 for the benefit of the Theological Seminary of New Haven. These are only examples of what has been done for the cause of benevolence by policies of life insurance. There are some reasons why they should be still more common, which will commend themselves to thoughtful men of means.

It secures a sum not likely to be paid in any other way, whether the life of the donor be brief or extended. If he dies before many years, he has given an amount he never could, or at least, would have done—five, ten, perhaps twenty times more than the cash with which he purchased the charity. If compelled to take a paid-up policy while living, he has the satisfaction of knowing that so much is certain for the object designated and near his heart. Let existence be prolonged, and however useful it may have been, a sum still exceeding the

aggregate of premiums paid, and which, it is not at all probable, would have been laid aside for the purpose, goes by a single check, into the treasury of a beneficent cause. We think the time will come when a large number of policies will be entered on the roll of charities, because of the peculiar advantages offered in thus connecting an uncertain life with a certain contribution to the highest good of a world left forever!

The Safest Investments.

THE great havoc which the recent financial depression, of three years' continuance, has wrought among investments of almost every class, is attracting more and more the attention of thinkers as well as of practical men. It is curious enough that, of all kinds of investors in this country, those which have suffered least are the only ones about whom there has been much clamor lately: the insurance companies, and especially those concerned with life insurance. These companies have a great many millions of dollars of the people's money, put away in investments which are regarded as permanent. Now while, since September, 1873, railroads have been suspending dividends by the score, and going into default on their bonds; while telegraph companies have lost half their profits; while manufacturing enterprises in general have been hovering between bare existence and utter failure; while mining corporations have forfeited their credit and prestige; and while private business in almost every mercantile branch has been at least decimated by bankruptcy, the whole amount of insolvency among the life insurance companies of the country has involved less than one-sixtieth part of the business. While the aggregate market value of the salable real estate of the country has actually fallen full 40 per cent, the value of the investments of these companies, most of which are secured upon real estate in some form, has increased; and the entire amount of losses which they have suffered by the depression is a small and insignificant percentage of what they have in hand. This fact deserves especial attention, inasmuch as the failure, or partial and technical failure, of the "Continental Life" of New York, has given the public a very different impression. It has been hastily reported that this company failed because of its losses in mortgage investments, caused by the fall in real estate; and that the same cause has largely impaired

the securities of other similar companies. Neither assertion is true. The company in question failed by the grossest mismanagement; and could not have stood if there had been no fall in real estate whatever. Its losses by failing mortgages have been insignificant, and even these have been, if current report is true, such as ought to have been avoided by other companies. The whole secret is this: the life companies have loaned their money on land and houses at from 30 to 50 per cent. of their value. The largest companies have never habitually loaned more than 40 per cent. of a low cash valuation. They loan only on improved property, where actual rental is ample security for taxes and interest. Thus, even the most terrible depreciation in real estate, even a panic which should destroy half its value, would leave their interest unharmed. No such violent fluctuations have ever been known in this country, in the value of land and houses, as could seriously impair the security of these investments. We are, doubtless, now approaching, or have reached, the end of the most trying period in our financial history. As matters clear up, and business skies brighten, there will be a gradual recovery of every branch of industry and commerce. But the first to rise and the surest to advance will be those which have best endured the strain. The fact that the life insurance companies have suffered least of all the great interests of the country cannot but direct attention to the secret of their extraordinary security. If we are not mistaken, the confidence of the public, of trustees, investors and courts, in real estate mortgage investments, is sure to be greatly strengthened and extended by the experience of recent years in this country.

A MAN ought to have some pride and fondness for his widow. I should I know. I take it as a test of a man, that he feels the easier about his death when he can think of his wife and daughters being comfortable after it. I like the story of the fellows in the Crimean war, who were ready to go to the bottom of the sea, if their widows were provided for.—George Eliot in *Daniel Deronda*.

CONGRESSMAN Frank Jones of Portsmouth has been the most insured man in New England, having \$140,000 in life policies; but Lawyer Francis A. Brooks of Boston has insured himself for \$150,000, and Mr. Jones proposes to put \$50,000 more on his own life.

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WM. H. ORR,

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The poor, oppressed, honest man
Had better ne'er been born,
Unless there be some recompense
To comfort those that mourn.

The Annual Report.

THE full particulars of the Annual Report cannot be obtained for this number of the Ætina. It will be given in our next issue. Enough is known, however, to assure all the friends of the Company, that the year has added to its prosperity. In spite of the hardness of the times, and the universal depression of all branches of business, the Ætina has gone on its prosperous way, enlarging its constituency, and adding to its assets and its surplus. Six thousand policies have been issued during the year, and the Assets are now \$27,000,000. The Surplus, by the most rigid tests of the Mass. Insurance Department is \$2,250,000, which furnishes a good basis for the dividend of the next year.

The economy of administration, and the safety of invested funds show the wisdom of the Directors. They have shunned the folly of putting up massive buildings, at large expense; and the prostration of real estate is the best comment on their policy. Their prudence has averted heavy losses. They have avoided, also, the rashness of younger companies, in making large outlays to create business. Caution and safety, united with enterprise, have marked their course from the beginning, and the Company deserves the reputation it has won. When business revives in the country, it will be in a condition to push forward its work with new vigor.

Eighteen Hundred Seventy-Six.

WITH the close of this eventful year, we send forth our thirty-fourth number of *The Ætina*. It is over eight years since our unpretending paper was first given to our policy holders and the public.

On the last page of Vol. I, bearing date October, 1868, we read,

"ASSETS NEARLY \$10,000,000.00."

We turn the leaves of sixteen numbers, and find, four years later,

"ACCUMULATED ASSETS, \$16,000,000.00."

In the issue of the April following, we pause over the mourning border of an obituary, and under the name of Judge E. A. Buckley, its honored President, we find the following sentence: "He has passed away, but the institution, to whose growth he contributed, remains, a monument of enduring strength." As the best possible illustration of the truth of this simple statement, we take up the record four years later, and see there these words and figures: "The Company has paid in twenty-five years, to policyholders, over \$28,000,000.00, and had remaining, January 1, 1876, for the protection of existing policies, \$22,092,734.32!

Good progress has been made during the year 1876, adding a million dollars to its assets. With such a history, we begin the year 1877.

In common with all departments of business, we have felt the effect of the prolonged and extraordinary stagnation, upon the cultivation of occupied fields and the opening of new ones. But in the solid security of the Ætina, lifting it above the occasion for anxiety respecting its future, there has been no change. We have only words of cheer for many thousands, who have been able, thus far, to keep in force the last thing with which to part in the material kingdom, A LIFE INSURANCE POLICY IN THE ÆTNA.

Long Payment of Premiums.

ALL men recognize the worth of insurance in case of an early death. But many imagine it involves an unwise expenditure, if the premiums are paid a score of years or more. So many payments outweigh, they think, the value of the policy. But they talk without book. A single case is in point. Among the recent deaths of policy holders is one of the earliest insurers in the Ætina. His first premium was paid in 1851, and has been paid regularly from that time forward, making twenty-six payments in all. He died recently, and the amount of his payments is less than two-thirds of the value of the policy. If this is the result of an insurance for twenty-six years, one need have little fear of paying out more than his family will receive. This case has the greater force, because the premium was larger than is now exacted, experience having taught the safety of lower rates.

A Large Stream.

OVER fifty millions of dollars have been paid out for death and endowment claims by 26 life insurance companies in the last thirty months; an average of over a million seven hundred thousand dollars a month.

This constant distribution is going on so quietly and silently that the mass of people know nothing of it. Not a day passes but thousands of dollars go out from these companies to benefit widows, relieve orphans, and pay creditors, which are not recorded by the press, and are unknown by the people.

It is an immense stream, constantly flowing, and of untold value to thousands of families.

AN INTELLIGENT FAITH.—A merchant, who had \$10,000 insurance on his life in the Ætina, was overtaken by commercial disasters, and felt compelled to exchange his policy for a paid-up insurance of \$1,565. He did it with great regret, and in November last, having received many favors from a son, took out a policy of \$1,000 for the benefit of that son. It was a wise step, and the single payment made was the only one needed. On the day after Thanksgiving, without warning or struggle, he fell dead on the floor, and the help received from the son will be returned with more than compound interest.

DID THEY DO BETTER.—Two men came to an agent of the Ætina in Vermont, and gave up their policies, saying, "I know I can do better with my money."

In less than two years the men were both dead. The widows received less than \$200, each, in place of the \$1,000 they might have had but for the short-sightedness of their husbands.

ONE of the death claims paid by the Ætina, in November last, was on the life of Mr. Samuel A. Andrews, of Buckley, Ill., who was killed by a stroke of lightning. Only one premium had been paid.

THE death losses paid by the company in 1876, average a trifle more than \$100,000 a month. The largest payments were made in the summer months. Six \$10,000 policies were paid in August.

"Merry Christmas."

(SEE CUT.)

"MERRY Christmas!" those voices clear
Ring out upon the air
Of early morn, and bright eyes peer
O'er cheeks as roses, fair,
Within the door, to see if there,
The loved and loving hear.

The closing year in every land,
These scenes of gladness brings;
And doubly blest the household band,
Where *slighted duty* flings
No shadow o'er the offerings
Held in affection's hand.

"Merry Christmas!" then risk not now
The mournful mockery,
O dotting father, which may bow
Those hearts, when thou shalt be
Beyond the orphan's silent plea,
The earth upon thy brow.

The Policy-Cure.

"I THINK I should have died when I was so nearly gone, had it not been for my insurance." So the Rev. Mr. K—, who is connected with one of our largest religious corporations, remarked to the writer, only a few days ago. For several years, he has had a policy in the Ætina; and with a family around him, in the hour when medical skill was useless, and life hung upon a thread which any breath might snap, this was the thought which shed cheering light, and held the frail tenure, till re-enforced by nature's hidden and restorative power. The statement was made with much emphasis and feeling, and suggested the value of insurance in sickness—a value not anticipated when the policy was written.

WELL INVESTED.—In Terrell, Kaufman Co., Texas, Mr. A. B. McDougald took a policy in the Ætina, on the 29th of April last. A careful medical examination declared him in perfect health, and a desirable subject for life insurance. In fourteen days from that time he was a corpse, dying from a malignant typhoid fever. His claim was paid September 1st, and for the single premium of \$97.94, his family received \$5,500.

Who shall say that he did not make a wise investment, and who can neglect to make a similar investment for a dependent family?

"Timely Words," with the "Compliments of the Season."

MORE than half a million of persons in these United States, will go to the "silent city," during 1877. Nearly all of these, excepting those who pass away in early existence, have an interest in life insurance, growing out of domestic ties, and other associations. Many will leave the scenes of earthly activity, cheered with the full assurance that a company good for the trusts committed to it, will pay thousands of dollars to survivors, which could have reached them only through that channel, thus meeting to some extent, the loss of the living source of supply.

For others, a similar treasure will save a complicated estate, or unsettled business from the expensive uncertainties of law, or the hands of the auctioneer.

A large number when smitten down, will regret the delay which robbed the loved, or creditors, of what might and ought to have been theirs.

My friend, whose eye may rest on this page, be consistent and candid, and tell me, if uninsured, is it right, with the probability of an enrollment in the grand army whose march is this year to the gate of death, to neglect the only duty that can directly have a small compensation for the loss of your precious life?

The Life Prolonged.

MR. B— was an honorable and successful merchant, who early took policies on his life to the amount of \$13,500. He died a few years since, having meanwhile failed in business, through his generous desire to aid a friend, by giving his signature to a large amount of paper. But he had kept his insurance in force; and although he recovered to a large extent his fortunes, and lived to the advanced age of seventy-six, neither he nor his heirs regretted the investment which had cost the premiums for so many years. And why? The shrewd merchant, and his sons, not inferior to him in business ability and its rewards, knew well that there would have been no change in the management of financial affairs, nor in the domestic supplies, had the annual premiums been withheld. They had been spread over many years, and would not otherwise have been taken out of the general business treasury. In a word, the heirs drew \$13,500, after his death, which was regarded justly in the light of a cash surplus over the ordinary gains of a long life.

On the interest of this sum, the widow was supported till her death, recently, and the principal goes to the estate. In such cases, there is a sufficient answer to the reply sometimes made when insurance is urged upon the attention; "I may live long enough to pay as much as will be received when the policies mature." If so, you ought to be grateful for the double blessing of a prolonged existence, and a material evidence of forethought, which will be no less thankfully appreciated by others.

It is the same with an endowment. We venture to affirm from some observation that the man cannot be found who was sorry he had taken the policy, when the term expired and he drew his check.

Katie Adams' Good Work.

THE cottage was not tumbling down—true, it had a very poor air, though so neat, and in the summer, picturesque with its trailing vines. The old man living there, Abner Somers, lived alone; his wife dead, and his only son, who had been living in a distant city, dead also, his fate seemed of the dreariest. Poverty and age had found him with all defences down.

Katie Adams lived a mile farther from town than the Somers Cottage. She never passed without going in to see if "Uncle Abner," was "about" as usual, and if she could do anything for him. She had been a pet with him and his wife since she could first call their names, and though no tie of blood bound them, that of mutual appreciation and service did so. Sometimes her mother's rather shrewish tongue gave utterance to her feeling that Katie was wasting time and interest on her old friend; but oftener a common humanity kept her silent, and Katie's good work went on with the more energy as the winter drew near with unusual severity.

On one particular day, Katie had gone into the town with her little wagon to make some necessary purchases. Coming home, she saw no light, no glow of the fire in the cottage windows. She went in apprehensively, not knowing the secret of the closed door, to find the old man lying almost fainting on his bed.

"It has come, Katie child—I must give up and die here alone."

"Not you," said the brave girl, "you will go home with me, and grow well and strong again with good nursing." She summoned a neighbor, and between them, he was dressed, and put beside Katie in the vehicle,

wrapped up against the cold. He made some demur, but it was useless, and taking a box with some clothing, and an old desk, to which Mr. Somers clung with great earnestness, Katie carried home her unaccepted, and she knew, unwelcome guest.

She bore her mother's remonstrance and even her father's questioning of the wisdom of her action without flinching. "I am sorry, mother, in this to go against your judgment and father's too, but somehow, I must believe I am right. It came to me like an order from one whom I must obey, to take Uncle Abner and comfort and care for him." "You may have all the trouble, and all the satisfaction, Katie," was the sarcastic reply. But Mr. Adams muttered, "Perhaps it was 'ordered,' who knows? and if we can stagger through the winter, the girl shall have my help in it. It was a noble thing, and worthy of our Katie."

It was a hard winter to more than the Adams family. It would have been death in its dreariest form to old Abner Somers, but for the good little Samaritan, who tended him now with a daughter's loving ministrations.

"God bless you, child, for this, and *He will*," he often said, with strange emphasis. And He did, every day. The little room seemed like the threshold of heaven to Katie and her father, for Abner Somers was venerable in years and in godliness; tried as by fire with many misfortunes, and finally with the desolation of outliving all of his own race, he yet blessed God for life, and patiently bided his time.

To Katie he had always been a loving teacher, for he was far more cultivated than her own kind but rough father, and had in his youth, seen much of the great world beyond the small town of P. His only son had been a lad of great promise, and Mr. Somers had spared no pains to give him every advantage of education. He died just as he had begun to be known as a lawyer of ability and growing influence. With his death, life lost its last hold on the stricken man. Blighted ambitions and failing health had inclined him to his lonely life, and made him avoid companionship with his ruder neighbors. To this fine nature the tender grace of Katie's ministry came like balm, and to her he grew more closely in the bonds of a grateful love.

February was cheery, and in the sunshine days Uncle Abner brightened up; but March winds blew away all promise of health, and in the gray of a March morning the old man died, his hand in that of the

gentle girl. A few days before, he had sent for the attorney in P., who had been his son's best friend, and they talked all one evening with closed doors.

This man came to the funeral which was a quiet one, and saw that the grave was made between the wife and son, whom the tender heart had never ceased to mourn for. After the family had returned to the house, and the few friends had dispersed, the lawyer said:

"Mr. Somers left a will which may surprise you, who did not know that he had anything to bequeath. His son had his life insured for five thousand dollars for his father's benefit. In his great sorrow for his loss, Mr. Somers would never think of touching this money, and no remonstrance of mine could remove his feeling against being in this way benefited by the death of the young man in whom his heart was bound up.

"But it has been a great comfort to him all winter that he could repay this family, and especially his dear Katie for the care and trouble of his home with you. He has left the money to you, Miss Katie, trusting to your love for your parents, and your good judgment in all things, that you would use it in that way which would most benefit all."

Katie, with her sweet face suffused with blushes, rose from her chair as the lawyer added this statement, in a state of bewilderment, almost incredulity. To her the sum seemed enormous, and far beyond her desires.

Her father said simply, "The child deserves it."

But Mrs. Adams sat pale, with a mingled surprise and remorse. "Yes, she deserves it, and how often she has gone without things herself this winter to furnish dainties for poor Uncle Abner, which I have begrudged him!"

"Well, Miss Katie, you have had your payment, as you went on, but it is only fair that you should now have a rich reward."

C. H. B. R.

The Only Stay.

An eminent lawyer died in Philadelphia, not many months ago. He had a high rank in his profession, and it had yielded him a generous income. It was well known that he had a large practice, and as he lived in elegant style, the impression was a general one that he had accumulated a handsome fortune. But, like many Americans, he lived quite up to his income.

His own tastes were luxurious, and his indulgence as a father nurtured similar tastes in his children. The expenses of the family increased rapidly as the children grew to mature years, and the lawyer found himself embarrassed, even with his large income. But personal pride and love for his children made him reluctant to retrench, and he preferred to borrow money, and mortgage his property, rather than introduce an unwelcome economy.

Every year added to his embarrassments, but he kept the secret to himself, and the truth was not suspected by his own family, or by the fashionable circles in which he moved. At length the crash came, but he escaped the shame of exposure, for his sudden death revealed the utter bankruptcy of the estate. House, library, furniture, everything was mortgaged and swallowed up by hungry claimants. The family who had supposed themselves in affluence, were suddenly reduced to penury.

But in the last extremity, a gleam of sunshine appeared. It was found that the lawyer had taken out policies of insurance to the amount of \$100,000, and these remained secure in the general wreck. Without the insurance, the family would have been helpless. With it, though compelled to surrender many of the luxuries to which they have been accustomed, they will still have all needful comforts. This provision is the only apology for the lawyer's course. It would have been the refinement of cruelty, if after training his family to a life of luxury, he had left them to struggle with want. It is unwise for any one to live in a style which exhausts his entire income. It is unpardonable if he does not make provision for his family by insurance, against his own sudden death. Children delicately nurtured will have hard thoughts of a father who leaves them penniless, when such a hard fate can be avoided by policies in safe companies.

A SPEEDY RETURN.—A young business man of Boston secured a policy of \$10,000 in the National Life Company of Vermont, on the twenty-third day of October. On the twenty-second day of November he died suddenly of an acute disease. He leaves a generous provision for the bereaved mother, who depended largely upon him for support, and which would have been lost, if he had delayed insuring only a few days longer. His example should inspire imitation. What is to be done should be done quickly.

Tear-Stained.

ONE day within the office door
There came a woman lone;
Her form the robes of mourning wore,
And when she spoke, the tone
Of voice was gentle, yet 'twas sad;
And in her hand she bore
The "little all" she had.

When scanned, it showed the watchful care
Which had the treasure kept,—
The only stains apparent there,
Were made when true love wept.
'Twas touching thus to see her bring
Within that hand so fair,
Love's tear-stained offering.

She said, "I never dreamed of this,
That death could lay him low,
And when he gave the farewell kiss,
I could not have it so;
But blessings on the cherished one,
Who passed to heav'nly bliss,
For what his love has done"

Could Not Afford It.

MR. B. gives us the following account of an acquaintance who could not afford to insure. He was a young mechanic with a wife and several children. He built houses, relying for capital chiefly on borrowed money. He would buy a lot, then get a loan, put up a house, and sell it. In order to use as much of his own money as possible, he mortgaged his home. Being thus cramped for capital, he thought he could not afford to pay out \$100 per year for life insurance. But one day he was taken suddenly ill, and in a few days more he was dead. It was found that all his property was in two houses—one of them his home—and both of them heavily mortgaged. The real estate market was dull, and the widow cannot sell either of them without a sacrifice. She cannot pay interest on the mortgages and support herself and family from the rent of one. There is danger that she will lose much of the small property left by her husband. A life policy of \$5,000 would have paid off both mortgages, left her a home free from debt, and a house to rent, from which she could have supported her family comfortably.—*N. Y. News Letter.*

"No judge of the supreme court of the state of Maine has ever died while holding office."

The first instance we ever met of men who did not need life insurance.

A FRUGAL wife said to the doctor who was cutting open the shirt of her husband, who had just fallen from apoplexy, "Please cut along the seam, Doctor."

"BOSTON has a business man who has written to his old mother every Sunday for 25 years, and regularly spent Thanksgiving with her."

We venture to affirm that man insured his life for that mother without being bored.

Isn't it the least bit funny that Elizur Wright, life-long insurance man, should be caught unsecured against a similar loss? He lost \$6,000 by the incendiary burning of his barn at Medford, with 25 tons of hay, two horses, four cows, and a bull; but there wasn't a cent of insurance.

I HEARD of a very old man like myself, who was asked what his age was. He answered: "The right side of 80." "I thought you were more than 80," said the inquirer. "Yes, I am beyond it," he replied, "and that is the right side, for I am nearer to my eternal rest."—*Rowland Hill.*

IN most policies of life insurance, among other questions occur: "Age of father if living? Age of mother if living?" A man in the country, who filled up an application, made his father's age 112, and his mother's 102. The agent was amazed at this showing, and fancied he had got an excellent subject; but, feeling somewhat dubious, remarked that the man came of a very long-lived family. "O, you see, sir," replied the applicant, "my parents died many years ago; but 'if living' would be aged as there put down." "O, I see," said the agent.

WHAT is the difference between an idler and an industrious man?

One wants to keep from work, and the other works to keep from want.

What is the difference between an industrious man and a tattler?

The first is a busybody in his own, and the second in other folks' matters.

What's the nature passage did the South Carolina Banking Board quote to the namesake of the Hebrew law-giver Moses?

"Who made thee a judge and a ruler over us?"

NEW YEAR'S THOUGHTS.—Now look for a "corner" in ice, especially if your boots haven't got nails in 'em.

At the front end of this month a new year comes in. So the almanac says.

Just where it comes in nobody seems to know.

Darn'd if I haven't set up whole nights trying to see where the old year left off.

It's very easy to see where I left off my old boots, as I gaze with fond emotion on my new French calf box-toed ones; but this New Year business gits me rather badly.

About this time newspaper offices look out for "Odes to the dying year." They are generally owed for, too.—*Solon Shingle.*

A BUSINESS GIRL OF CHICAGO.—When a Chicago girl received a despatch from Wisconsin, announcing that her lover was going off with consumption, she telegraphed to his friends: "Has poor Jeffrey kept up his life insurance?" The friend telegraphed back: "Policy for \$10,000 in your favor is paid up till May 9, 1877. Poor Jeffrey cannot last after the first cold snap." The young lady then wondered philosophically how she would look in black, and telegraphed to Jeffrey:

"Darling, I will be with you on Tuesday, never to quit you during life.

LURLINE."

"It will be a sad loss to you, my love," said her mother. "Yes, ma," sobbed the girl, "but the loss is fully covered by insurance."

THEY had been engaged a long time, and one evening were reading the paper together. "Look, love," he exclaimed, "only fifteen dollars for a suit of clothes!" "Is it a wedding suit?" she asked, looking naively at her lover. "Oh! no," he replied, "it is a business suit." "Well, I meant business," she replied.—*Metros' Journal.*

"Fred," said a young man, the other day, after listening to his wonderful story, "do you know why you are like a harp struck by lightning?" "No," says Fred, "I give it up." "Because a harp struck by lightning is a blasted lyre."

WHATEVER promises to pay is a favorable one men.

Spanish proverb: "When mothers-in-law fall out, then we get at the family facts."

Kind Words.

MANY letters are received at the Ætina office, whose pathos would move the hardest hearts. Widows who feared penury, but find a competence secured; orphans, who dreaded a breaking up of the family, which is averted; and aged parents, made comfortable in their helpless years by the thoughtful provision of sons. Could the public see these letters, they would appreciate more fully the beneficence of life insurance, and wonder that any can wilfully neglect it.

We give a single letter, which as it touches on no family secret, may be published without any violation of confidence. It is from Little Rock, Arkansas:

"Allow me, in behalf of the *widow* and *orphan*, to thank you for your gentlemanly and prompt adjustment of the claim of W. B. Wiggs, deceased. I have a paid-up policy in the Ætina, which I now regard as being worth its *face in gold*.

Yours very truly,

J. J. Wiggs.

Persons desiring to insure or act as Agents for this Company, will address

Ætina

Life Insurance Office,

(OPPOSITE THE NEW POST OFFICE,)

ST. JAMES STREET, MONTREAL,

J. R. ALEXANDER, M. D.,

City Manager,

WM. H. ORR,

Dominion Manager.

ÆTNA
LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY,
OF
HARTFORD, CONN.

INCORPORATED IN 1820.

ORGANIZED IN 1850.

T. O. ENDERS, *President.*

AUSTIN DUNHAM, *Vice-President.*

J. L. ENGLISH, *Secretary.*

H. W. ST. JOHN, *Actuary.*

J. C. WEBSTER, *General Sup't of Agencies.*

The Financial Management of the Company is

ABLE, THOROUGH, RIGID, CRITICAL.

NO OVER-VALUING OF ASSETS.

NO UNDER-ESTIMATING OF LIABILITIES.

Its accumulated assets, safely invested, amounted Jan. 1, 1877, to over

\$23,000,000.00.

This sum provides for all the Company's liabilities by the most severe test of any Insurance Company or State Department, and leaves over

\$2,250,000.00 SURPLUS.

Calculated by the standard of the New York Insurance Department, the Surplus would be nearly \$4,000,000.00.

The characteristics of the Ætina are

RIGID ECONOMY, ABSOLUTE SECURITY,

PROMPT PAYMENT OF LOSSES,

FAIR DEALING WITH ALL POLICY-HOLDERS.

The Ætina issues Policies on all plans in general use at

Unusually Low Cash Rates, with Annual Cash Dividends.

It issues RENEWABLE TERM POLICIES, on a plan originally introduced by this Company, which furnishes immediate insurance at

THE SMALLEST POSSIBLE OUTLAY OF MONEY.

The Company also issues WHOLE LIFE POLICIES, at *low stock rates*, giving each year what is equivalent to a dividend in advance.

☞ All policies now issued are NON-FORFEITING by their terms. ☞

It is believed there is nothing valuable in life insurance which the Ætina does not furnish.