

became a Vice-President from 1892-96 and President in 1900 and 1901. He was a member of the Joint Committee on Mortality Investigation of the combined experience of British Life Offices (1863-93).

On the official side, Higham received his early business training in the Rock Life Assurance Company and in 1872 joined the Metropolitan Life as Assistant Actuary. In 1889 he was appointed Actuary of the Economic Life and in 1891 Actuary and Secretary (afterwards Actuary and Manager) of the London Life Association of which he was a Director at the time of his death.

It may be questioned whether Higham had not a greater influence upon the profession, which was in an adolescent stage in his days, by his personal characteristics, than he would have done had he entered the lists against his famous contemporaries and predecessors. Believing that character was more desirable than ability, that "breeding was better than brains" (as he once said to the present writer), that sympathy, courtesy and consideration for others were the best currency in the varied dealings of man with man, Higham led his friends and juniors into the primrose path of success and happiness through devotion to duty, self-sacrifice and earnest study. Among his personal attributes were, also, an unusual degree of the power of eloquent expression, and his almost fastidious insistence upon the minor offices of professional life being carried out upon the highest level. Dealing with the first point, I well remember his allocution delivered at the Institute of Actuaries on the death of Queen Victoria (*J.L.A.* Vol. xxxvi, p. 1). I was profoundly impressed with the stately dignity of this utterance, and at the moment I thought that nothing nobler or more strikingly appropriate had fallen from the lips of any public man. His speech at a meeting of the Institute in October 1927, when a Gold Medal was presented to the late George King, was of the same high order.

Higham has passed, and his friends must bow in sadness to their loss. The whole actuarial world will wish to offer the deepest sympathy to the widow of one who lifted its banner high during his long and honourable life.

G. H. RYAN

SVEN PALME

THE Swedish insurance world suffered a great loss when Mr Sven Palme died on the 9th August 1934. For fully thirty years he was one of its most outstanding personalities, whose influence had been exerted with beneficial results in various directions.

Born on the 4th December 1854, at Kalmar, Mr Sven Palme commenced active life as a lieutenant in the Swedish Regiment of Artillery. Developing the study of mathematics, he became an instructor in this subject. In 1883, however, he took the post of assistant actuary to the Victoria Insurance Company under the distinguished actuary Professor Gösta Mittag-Leffler. In 1885 he was appointed Life Manager of the Scandia, and in 1888 General Manager of the Thule. With the latter

office he continued to the end, being made Chairman of Directors on his retirement a few years ago from the executive post.

The Swedish Actuarial Society was not founded until 1904, by which time Mr Palme could no longer be included within the ranks of practising actuaries, although he became a member later on (see *J.I.A.* Vol. LXI, p. 148). He was fully imbued with the ideals and responsibilities of the actuarial profession at all times, and did much to enhance its status.

During the periods 1894-96 and 1905-11 he was a Member of the Swedish Parliament, and at various times occupied other positions of distinction.

Towards the end of last century the business of insurance as conducted in Sweden presented certain unsatisfactory features, and accordingly Mr Palme furthered the promotion of a Bill for its regulation. The first draft did not meet his views; but after bringing about consultations and collaboration between the Government and prominent insurance men and institutions, an Act was passed in 1903, which *inter alia* placed much responsibility upon actuaries.

In developing the Thule office, the examples set by the best and most successful institutions in the world were emulated with happy results. Furthermore, the Thule from time to time published instructive records of its experience, including life tables which have proved useful (see *J.I.A.* Vol. LXIV, p. 543).

A great advocate of co-operative effort, both national and international, he urged joint action by Scandinavian offices to compile life tables for annuitants and for assured lives, as also for under-average lives. As to the latter, a special Report was published in 1919, based on 32,580 lives. Other developments with which he was closely associated were the Information and Registration Bureaux of the Association of Insurance Managers. Agents are registered and supervised in accordance with a general agreement among the offices.

The International Actuarial Congresses received his cordial support, and at their meetings he was invariably a conspicuous figure. Their revival in the old form owed much to his intervention—a long-held aspiration being fulfilled by the successful Stockholm Congress. He maintained the highest ideals for all connected with insurance. "High stands the calling of the insurance man", he said; "the insurance man—if he rightly understands his task—works not merely for himself, not merely for his own office, but for the great and good which insurance connotes".

Mr Sven Palme's fine character and many services to insurance were recognized publicly on various occasions during his lifetime, notably to celebrate his 65th, 70th and 75th birthdays. For his 70th birthday the Swedish Insurance Society (founded 1875), of which he was Chairman from 1903 until 1930, issued a handsome medallion of him, engraved in glowing terms, testifying to the esteem in which he was held.

G. W. R.