

Life Company's Health Bureau.

On Saturday, official announcement was made by the superintendent of insurance for New York state to the effect that he had authorized the Provident Savings Life to issue new policies and resume full functions as a life company. An examination by the department shows that, since reorganization under President E. E. Rittenhouse, the impairment of the company's capital stock has disappeared and that it now has a surplus of about \$70,000.

Savings, not only in the natural increases which follow a cessation in the writing of new business, but also in loading and mortality, have made it possible for this company in a little less than two years not only to wipe out the impairment, but also to establish a surplus, the total gain being nearly \$500,000.

The company is signaling its full deliverance from the house of bondage by establishing a Policyholder's Health Bureau—along the lines urged some time since by Prof. Fisher, of Yale, and others. The expressed object is "to increase mortality savings as far as possible by helping policyholders to (a) prevent disease, (b) to discover disease in time to check or cure it." This assistance is to be rendered all policyholders without charge through the medium of (1) health bulletins, (2) correspondence, (3) medical examination, every two years, of such policyholders as request it.

United States Tariff.

The new United States Tariff is a striking illustration of the disadvantages of the system of public discussion of tariff policy in advance—perhaps rather we should say the superiority of the British and Canadian system of a responsible government in a position to mould its tariff policy *in camera*. The mountain having been conspicuously in labour for many months has brought forth a mouse. The Payne bill was going to promote trade with Canada, then it was going to abolish trade with Canada, to-day it has about as much effect upon trade with Canada as water upon a duck's back. That during the discussion it may have caused uneasiness and some demoralization of commerce is likely, but this is part of the price of the system.

Departmental Actuaries.

Under Mr. A. K. Blackadar, M.A., F.I.A., as Chief Actuary, the Insurance Department at Ottawa has always enjoyed a notable actuarial reputation. It is interesting to note that three members of the staff made a successful showing at the recent Institute of Actuaries examinations.

Mr. A. D. Watson and Mr. N. H. Gilliland have passed in Part II, and they are, therefore, now A.I.A.'s—and Mr. A. N. McTavish has passed in the paper on Compound Interest and Annuities.

Mr. Watson is a Nova Scotian and graduate of Dalhousie. He has been nearly four years in the Department, and is now assistant actuary. Mr. Gilliland and Mr. McTavish are Ontario men and Toronto University graduates.

Osaka Conflagration.

The City of Osaka, Japan, has suffered a terrible conflagration. Twenty thousand buildings were destroyed, hundreds of people injured, thousands are homeless and many starving. This is serious enough, but the burning of

twenty thousand Japanese houses built of wood and paper, does not mean anything like as big a disaster as the destruction of twenty thousand houses in any city of the western world. But a home is a home, even if it is not much more substantial than a bandbox.

Spanish Revolution.

Don Jaime, the new pretender to the Spanish throne, has naturally taken advantage of the sanguinary revolution at Barcelona to make a little political capital for himself. He makes his declaration from the safe distance of Vienna and announces that he will never lead Spaniards against Spaniards unless he returns to Spain at the head of an army to restore order, after King Alfonso has been driven out. He also makes ungallant remarks about Queen Victoria. Altogether the impression he creates is that Spain has not much to gain by substituting him for Alfonso.

Mexican Earthquakes.

Mexico City, Acapulco, and Chilpancingo, Mexico, have been visited by a series of destructive earthquakes, with the usual accompaniment of a disastrous tidal wave. That tidal wave is the rainbow of hope for big cities situated like Montreal in centres of ancient seismic and volcanic activity, but which are now far away from the sea. The earthquake regions may not be easy to define with absolute accuracy, although their general outlines are fairly well known, but according to all experience proximity to the sea is essential to a really big shake-up. It is many centuries since Montreal was a sea-side resort.

Hailstorm in Manitoba.

A heavy hailstorm in Manitoba serves to call attention to Canada's general immunity from serious storms. The crops in an area of several square miles are badly damaged. The same storm did considerable damage in Northern Dakota. Hailstones six to seven inches in diameter are reported, and may possibly have materialized, but the dimensions of hailstones are as uncertain as the size of the fish that got away. Any hailstones larger than a plover's egg striking a man on the head would impress him as being from eighteen to twenty-one inches in circumference. Memory and imagination only increase their growth.

Strike Fever in Nova Scotia.

The miners of Nova Scotia seem to be cursed with the deadly contagion of the strike fever. The miners of Springhill are now threatening to strike for the recognition of that mischievous foreign organization the United Mine Workers. It is said that the Springhill men are still handicapped by debts incurred during the last strike, and the trades people are naturally against any further follies of this kind for the present.

Mr. J. J. Hill Honoured.

Minnesota Day at the Alaska-Yukon Pacific Exhibition was celebrated by unveiling a bronze bust of Mr. James J. Hill. Mr. Hill, like Christopher Wren, has built his own best monument. Many thousands of miles of steel laid where it will do the most good is the useful memorial of a useful life which we hope has many more years of usefulness to come.