

drawn or withheld from the banks have found more remunerative occupation, or what the owners hope will be more profitable employment than resting on deposit in a bank. The calls for new capital for industrial enterprises, for extensions, for improvements were so numerous in the United States last year as to absorb millions of money that, were trade less active, would have been deposited. The accumulation of capital was going on last year all the time, but the banks were outbid by other enterprises. The productive capacities of the United States are so enormous and the vigour, the enterprise of the people so great as to create financial conditions that are liable to be misinterpreted when viewed from the standpoint of old world ideas, methods and phenomena.

#### TREATMENT OF SUICIDE STATISTICS.

We doubt the advisability of giving much prominence to, or frequently dilating upon the suicide question. Dwelling upon morbid subjects develops morbid thoughts and habits of mind. This crime cannot, however, be wholly ignored, its bearing upon life assurance seems to be developing, though the data upon which belief rests is very imperfect and has never been scientifically treated. It would be desirable to have returns showing the relative percentages of the suicides to the number of life policyholders during a series of years, the ages of such as committed suicide, the term their life policies had been issued, the average amount of such policies. These should be collated with the annual returns of suicides irrespective of life assurance so that a judgment might be formed as to whether the suicides by life policyholders were increasing by a higher ratio in proportion to population, than those by the uninsured. As the percentage of persons holding life policies rises so also increases the number of suicides by the holders of life policies. How far this accounts for the increase in number of suicides amongst policyholders is worth investigating.

A paper by Mr. Hoffman, published in the "New York Spectator," comprises the following table:—

SUICIDES IN FIFTY AMERICAN CITIES—1890-1901.

	Total population (50 Cities).	Suicides.	Suicide rate per 100,000 of Population.
1890.....	10,202,017	1,223	12.0
1891.....	10,499,098	1,465	14.0
1892.....	10,808,729	1,409	13.0
1893.....	11,102,211	1,764	15.9
1894.....	11,447,848	1,773	15.5
1895.....	11,785,348	1,839	15.6
1896.....	12,131,332	1,934	15.9
1897.....	12,478,410	2,161	17.3
1898.....	12,863,239	2,230	17.3
1899.....	13,238,013	2,121	16.0
1900.....	13,631,180	2,156	15.8
1901.....	14,014,808	2,322	16.6
1890-1895.....	65,842,251	9,473	14.4
1896-1901.....	78,356,982	12,924	16.5

Statistics of this nature are always open to doubt, and their treatment at times is not judicial. Suppose we take the years 1896, 1897 and 1898, and compare them with 1899, 1900, 1901, we get the following results, the annual average of the first three years in proportion to population is 16.87 per 100,000 of population, and the average of the second group of later years is only 16.14 per 100,000 of population. From this comparison we may fairly conclude that suicides are diminishing as compared with a few years ago. If we take the average of the 8 years, 1893 to 1900, both inclusive, we find it to be 16.19, whereas the average of 1900 was 16.56, so then, by taking a wider basis for a comparison, we have evidence pointing to a decrease of suicides, and not to an increase. It is, however, one of the puzzles of sociology to discover the law of variation in phenomena of this class. When we find that, in St. Louis, Mo., the suicide rate is reported for the 10 year period, 1891-1900, to have been 25.7 per 100,000 of inhabitants, and only 2.9 per 100,000 in Fall River, Mass., we suspend judgment, as such a difference renders us very suspicious of the data on which such conclusions are based.

One thing is indisputable, the rush and tear and sensationalism of present day life is causing an extraordinary number of cases of "nervous prostration," which was seldom heard of some years ago, the disappointments of life are now more frequent and more distressing than in earlier days, the pendulum of life swings through a wider arc, further away from the rest point of contentment, and these conditions are those best suited for developing the morbid unrest which generates the suicidal impulse.

#### ONTARIO LAW AND BRITISH COLUMBIA LOAN COMPANIES.

Early in January last Mr. Langlois, President of the British Columbia Loan and Savings Company, called our attention to what he and others regard as the unfair operation of the law in Ontario by which that Loan and Savings Company is not allowed to operate in that Province. As a matter of news we briefly noticed Mr. Langlois' protest. This news paragraph called out a letter signed "A Permanent Loan Company official," which treated the matter rather facetiously. Since then the question has been discussed in the "Province," a British Columbia journal and in the Toronto "Evening News." The law of Ontario reads:—

"Where the Corporation takes power by its instrument of association or by-laws to issue terminating shares the Corporation shall be limited in its operations to a particular county (as is by section 8 provided in the case of provincial corporations issuing terminating shares), and the certificate of registry shall