Institute of Actuaries. The most scientific methods of compiling data were employed for the purpose by Mr. Moore. In the end, the following conclusion, among others was reached: that the Abstainers show a marked superiority to the Non-Abstainers throughout the entire working years of life, for every class of policy, and for both sexes, however treated.

This conclusion is very positive and harmonizes with the opinion generally held by the medical profession. On the other hand, the New Zealand Insurance Department acting partly upon the advice of the eminent actuaries R. P. Hardy and George King dissolved the separate department kept for abstainers on the ground that the difference in mortality was so slight that the maintainance of distinct sections was not justified. The matter, therefore, is one which is still open to debate, although the concensus of opinion firmly adheres to the superiority of the abstainer, and it is most improbable that there will ever be a time when it will be a belief that life can be preserved in alcohol.

It is a very difficult matter for a Life Insurance Company to secure definite and reliable information about the habits of persons proposing themselves for insurance. Few will care to admit that they drink immoderately and nearly all will underestimate the quantity they consume. It used to be the practice, more than it is now, to require the names of two personal friends, from whom enquiries were made with particular regard to the habits of the proposer. The completion of these forms required a considerable amount of time and labor from the agent and often placed the referees in embarrassing positions, especially if a favourable statement could not honestly be given. On the other hand, important disclosures were often made, of the utmost value to the company. Information was thus acquired which could not easily be obtained in any other way.

The question about the habits was put to the referee in some such way as this. Have you any personal or hearsay knowledge that the life's habits are or have ever been otherwise than strictly temperate?

The question is direct and categorical: it calls for a simple affirmative or negative answer. In reality, however, there are complications involved in the replies.

In the first place, consider the case of an applicant who is strictly temperate.

The only reply that can be expected from the referee is a straight forward negative. It will very rarely happen that a referee will maliciously slander his friend by calling him intemperate.

On the other hand, the applicant may have been intemperate or perhaps is so now. The referee may not know of this and gives a favourable answer in perfectly good faith. If, however, he is aware of the intemperate conduct of the life, three ways of answering the question about habits are open. He may in the first place deny any knowledge by giving a favorable answer and so avoid compromising his friend. But, generally speaking, a falsehood will not be told unless its author can gain some personal benefit from it. In the second place, he may freely and candidly admit his knowledge and thus keep himself from being compromised. Lastly he will try to avoid involving himself or his friend by making some ambiguous or evasive answer.

As this is the most usual course, it follows that any hesitation on the part of the referee should be regarded as a danger signal. In most cases where an answer is anything more than a direct negative, the referee will be willing to admit a great deal more than he has cared to put into writing.

The great care that life companies exercise in searching for information about the habits of proposers is evidence of their partiality for those of temperate conduct. Apart from the ill effects of alcohol on the constitution, the life who is abstemious from drink will take equally good care of himself in other ways. Life companies are unanimous in their efforts to avoid the insuring of confirmed alcoholics.

CALEDONIAN INSURANCE COMPANY.

The one hundred and fifth annual report of the Caledonian Insurance Company is published on another page of this issue. The report indicates that the company has lost none of its popularity. A cursory glance at the figures reveals the fact that the year 1909 was a profitable one.

In the fire department the net premiums amounted to \$2,179,015 (a slight decrease from the previous year caused by the company's withdrawal from Australian business). Interest on fire funds was \$24,458 making a total of \$2,203,465. The net losses were \$1,025,045, a ratoo of 47.04 per cent., while commission expenses and taxes absorbed \$798,500—36.65 per cent. of the premiums leaving a surplus of \$379,920 on the year's trading.

With the amount at credit of profit and loss brought forward from 1908, balance of general interest, etc., and the surplus on the year's trading, the directors had the sum of \$933,520 at their disposal. After providing for the year's dividend at the rate of \$6 per share (free of income tax) and transferring \$500,000 to a reserve fund, a sum of \$433,520 is carried forward at credit of profit and loss account.

In Canada the fire premiums were \$327,341, and the net losses incurred amounted to \$135,698 giving a loss ratio of 41.4 per cent.

The loss ratio of the company at large and that of the company in Canada is somewhat exceptional.

Mr. Lansing Lewis represents this old and popular Scottish Fire Office in Canada assisted by Mr. J. G. Borthwick, secretary.

HOME BANK STAFF CHANGES.

Mr. C. M. Wrenshall, who was formerly manager of the Merchants Branch at Owen Sound, has been appointed local manager of the Home Bank of Canada at Walkerville, and Mr. F. F. Lovegroove, who since the promotion of Mr. John Adair to Fernie Branch of the Home Bank, has been acting manager over the Branch at Walkerville and Sandwich, now returns to his former post as local manager of the Home Bank Branch at Sandwich.