

The failure of Blair & Co., private bankers, is referred to at some length in our St. John letter last week. It resulted from investments in gold mining, which the proprietors could not afford. Such instances as this discredit private banking.

There is talk in Montreal about forming an association of bank clerks. A meeting of some sixty persons was held recently in the Merchants Bank to confer to that end, and a committee was chosen to see what could be done. We are told that the Bank Managers' Association has offered its aid in forming the new bank clerks' association. The idea is to have the new society partly a social club and partly of an educational character. Papers would probably be read and discussed at intervals.

Something rather novel has cropped up in connection with the proposal of Edmonton, Alberta, that it shall be made a city. Application is already made for a charter as a city. In the matter of taxation, the Mayor has stated that it is proposed that the land be taxed according to location, and the buildings be not assessed, as at present, as unfair to the ratepayer who improves his property, thus enhancing the value of adjoining land. He asked Premier Haultain his views of this proposal, and the Premier heartily endorsed it. The principle is worked in the school districts thereabout, and the new municipal bill embodies it.

INSURANCE MATTERS.

The North American Life Insurance Company has appointed Mr. G. H. Simpson, who was formerly with the Manufacturers' Life, as manager for Montreal and district.

We have heard of a promotion in insurance circles, which seems to be considered well deserved. Mr. C. T. Gillespie, who has been lately manager for Ontario and the Maritime Provinces of the Provident Savings Life Assurance Society, of New York, with headquarters in Toronto, has been made general manager of that company for Canada. Mr. Gillespie, before coming to Toronto, managed the "Provident Savings" business in the Maritime Provinces for twelve years. He is an active man, in the prime of life, and carries with him many good wishes.

The Maryland Casualty Co., of Baltimore, which entered the Canadian field some months ago, has recently secured, we understand, a license to do a boiler inspection and insurance business all over Canada. This company has found the sprinkler leakage business less profitable than it was thought it would be, hence the change referred to. In this connection, we may say that the company is moving into new and more commodious offices, in the rejuvenated and now handsome Sun Fire Building, on Wellington St. East. They will occupy the top floor, and the offices are to be fitted up in the most modern fashion.

The Dominion Commercial Travellers' Mutual Benefit Society held their annual meeting on Saturday afternoon, in Montreal. Mr. Alexander Murphy, recently elected president, succeeding the late regretted W. T. Le Sueur, occupied the chair. The treasurer's statement showed the total receipts to be \$18,783.97, and disbursements \$16,021.10, there having been \$1,000 each paid to the heirs of sixteen deceased members. The following are extracts from the report: "Notwithstanding the heavy death list, the year has been marked by many encouraging features. There were 150 new admissions to membership—this being the largest number in any single year during the last decade. Present membership 1,045. The society has paid each of the death claims almost at once after the presentation of the necessary proofs. This prompt attention has elicited many warm letters of appreciation from grateful beneficiaries. . . . Your board, in closing, would urge—both as a matter of self-interest and mutual loyalty, that each member take it to heart—to increase our membership. This is the solution of success. The board is ambitious to add to the roll during 1904 at least an additional 500, and take the responsibility of predicting that under such circumstances six regular assessments per annum would be ample to meet all requirements. In preparing new names, see that the applicants

are in sound health, of good habits, and under 45 years of age."

The Maryland Casualty Company advertise that a license has been issued to them by the Dominion Government, permitting said company to transact accident, sickness, and steam boiler insurance in Canada. J. William Mackenzie, chief agent for Canada, Wellington street east.

An extensive addition to the already large building of the Canada Life Assurance Company in Toronto, is to be made on the corner lot of King and Bay, now occupied by the Meisons Bank (the old Cawthra residence) and a part of the Robinson House lot on Bay street. The real estate has been purchased, we are told, in both cases.

The members of the Montreal Fire Department are giving fresh proof of their mechanical ingenuity. A new double hose sleigh, capable of carrying 1,000 feet of hose, has been added to the equipment of No. 5 fire station. The vehicle was made, we are told, at the department's own shops, and is a credit to the makers, and satisfactory to Captain Johnson and his men.

Who owns the business, neck and crop, without whom everything would stop and premiums take a sudden drop?—the broker. Who always kicks about the rate, wants his accounts put on the slate, and has Old Nick for running mate?—the broker. Who thinks that cutting is not crime, for tariffs doesn't care a dime, and raises Sheol all the time?—the broker.—Insurance Age.

Max Kronfeld, the insurance adjuster, who made a sensational confession to the New York District Attorney of dishonest methods employed by public insurance adjusters, was sentenced on Friday last by Recorder Goff, to serve not less than three years nor more than three years and nine months in the States prison for the presentation of a false claim to an insurance company.

Addressing a gathering of medical men upon the subject of medical examinations for life assurance, Dr. John L. Davison used the following language: ". . . The importance of careful work [in examining applicants for assurance], is even greater in another direction; I mean the protection of the companies and, through them eventually, of the public. May I make this assertion? I believe that if every examination was conducted in the best and most scientific manner possible, with the status of medical science as it to-day is, and the full information placed in the hands of the head office, life assurance would be about one-third cheaper than it now is."

ANSWERS TO ENQUIRERS.

Enquirer, Hamilton.—If you will look at the last letter of our Australian correspondent, you will see what he thinks of it. Here is an extract, in case you have not a copy at hand: "New South Wales and Victoria have to go on the market; the one to meet the necessities of its gigantic scheme of purchasing the wharves and adjoining ports of the city of Sydney, and its other public works; the other to meet obligations falling due. Both have obtained short date loans at a cost, expense included, of slightly over four per cent. for New South Wales and slightly under for Victoria. Prior to the Canadian Confederation, the securities of Old Canada ranked so much below those of New South Wales that they had to bear nearly one per cent. per annum more interest and even the Official Statistician of this Government recorded it with a cackle. Now that conditions are reversed, this table is omitted in his returns. The newspapers do too much in this line of flattering the Australian by publishing all in which he excels and hiding the failures. Perhaps this is one of the failures of John Bull and family," etc.

TRADE OPPORTUNITIES.

Canadian Government Offices, London, 4th December. —A London firm might buy or receive consignments of picture frame mouldings, pastry boards, knife boards, broom handles, clothes pegs, enamelled ware. Is there any market