

"As a counsel of perfection," however, he recommends that all healthy persons under middle age should abstain entirely from alcoholic beverages, and that persons whose family history shows a taint of mental instability or of alcoholism should abstain.

"Why should temperate men continue to be penalized by the presence of intemperate persons in the general section of life assurance offices?" asks Dr. Duncan. "We are having new options offered of almost every kind except this. Let a new option be offered to temperate people of the same rates as those given to total abstainers." His proposal is that in the new temperance section suggested, assured persons should declare annually that they do not exceed the daily amount of alcohol indicated as the physiological limit for the average man—one glass of whiskey or its equivalent.

Aside from the difficulties such a plan presents from the life office viewpoint, it is more than doubtful whether, as Dr. Duncan thinks, "an office offering this option would attract not only all the temperate users of alcohol, but also that numerous class who, while they rarely take any alcoholic beverage, object to sign away their liberty by taking a total abstinence pledge." To some "temperate users" it might seem a very conditional "liberty" to have premium rates conditioned by periodical affidavits that to the best of their knowledge and belief they "had not drunk, imbibed or otherwise partaken of" (plus any other legal-sounding verbiage) more than 2½ ounces of whiskey, or 20 ounces of beer, or 8 ounces of claret, on any day during the year ending December 31st. The man of six-foot-two might consider his "physiological limit" as somewhat greater than that of a neighbour whose cubic dimensions were notably less.

The prudent wife, as a prospective beneficiary under such a policy, might get the habit of saying, when the insured asked to have the claret passed: "Don't you think you have reached your physiological limit, my dear?" 'Twould drive some men to drink, we fear.

TRADERS BANK OF CANADA.

The Traders Bank, of Toronto, will next week open for business in Montreal—a commodious branch office having been secured in the Metropolitan Bank Building, St. James St. Since its foundation in 1887 the Traders has attained to prominence among Canadian banks. Its authorized capital is now \$5,000,000; paid-up capital is \$4,354,398 and rest \$2,000,000. Its total assets are almost \$40,000,000. Recently the dividend was placed on an 8 p.c. basis.

The board of directors comprises Messrs. C. D. Warren, president; Hon. J. R. Stratton, vice-president; C. Klopfer, W. J. Sheppard, C. S. Wilcox, E. F. B. Johnston, and H. S. Strathy.

Mr. Stuart Strathy is general manager and Mr. N. T. Hillary, assistant general manager.

The Montreal branch will be under the management of Mr. F. W. Bain.

THE MUTUAL LIFE OF CANADA reports that 1909 will show the greatest volume of new business ever written by the company.

From Across the Line.

NEW YORK INSURANCE LETTER.

Comparative Failure of Savings Bank Life Insurance Scheme—Companies' Aim to make Mortality Savings—Insurance Rate-Making by States—Special Correspondence of THE CHRONICLE.

The dismal disappointment resulting from the savings bank life insurance experiment in Massachusetts, the introduction of which plan was also attempted in New York State, should be a warning for generations to come to all countries or commonwealths which may have imbibed the idea that life insurance can be conducted without agents. After more than a year's experience and great effort the only two banks in Massachusetts which took up the matter in earnest are found with but very little insurance in force and a small premium income, notwithstanding the fact that they were located in large industrial cities where, if the plan could be worked at all, it would be likely to succeed, especially with the encouragement of large employers. The actuary who attempted to work out the plans for the Massachusetts experiment has removed to New York, and has become the actuary for the Provident Savings Life Assurance Society.

Co-operation in Prolonging Life.

There is a tendency at the present time to protect life insurance policyholders, and encourage a lower mortality by active efforts on the part of companies themselves. The Metropolitan Life and the Provident Savings are two companies which have taken up the matter and are endeavoring to apply to their policyholders personally the plan of co-operation in prolonging life. It will be remembered that the insurance department decided that it was not legal for the Metropolitan Life to use its funds to build a sanitarium for the benefit of tuberculosis policyholders, but the company has evidently decided not to submit to this ruling as a finality, and has taken the matter to the courts. The Provident Savings undertakes to supply free medical examinations and advice to any policyholders who may need or apply for it.

Large interest has centered recently in the discussion by various important officials of the question of making fire insurance rates by the State. Almost without exception opinion has been against the desirability or the possibility of any such scheme. This discussion has been provoked by the recently enacted laws in Kansas and Texas, as other commonwealths, especially in the West, have threatened to follow their example. It is argued that if rates can come under the supervision of the State, it will not be long before commissions and other expenses may also be subjected to state regulation. This would virtually take fire insurance management out of the hands of experienced men and place it under the control of grasping politicians.

Notes and Items.

The Provident Savings Life has made an innovation by the appointment of five policyholders on its board of directors, two to be appointed by