

COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS' DINNER
AT HAMILTON.

The Hamilton branch of the Commercial Travellers' Association, instead of its usual conversazione or ball, gave this year a dinner, which happy event took place at the Royal Hotel on Friday evening last, 28th December. The attendance was in the neighborhood of 100, although covers had been laid for many more, who were unable to be present owing to the failure of the Dominion Association to conclude the business of its annual meeting in Toronto in time to get the train for Hamilton.

The appointments of the eight-course dinner were excellent. Mr. H. G. Wright, vice-president for Hamilton, was in the chair, and the vice-chairs were occupied by Mr. W. G. Reid and Mr. J. H. Herring. Mr. Herring presented the regrets of Messrs. C. C. VanNorman, R. H. Gray, and J. C. Beck, retiring president, president-elect, and secretary, respectively, of the General Board, who were detained in Toronto.

In his opening speech, the chairman noted with gratification the growth of the association from a membership of 558 twenty-one years ago to almost 4,000 at the present time. Our surplus, said Mr. Wright, in the year 1873 was only \$959.96, and to-day it has reached the handsome sum of \$238,524.28, and we have paid in accident bonuses and mortuary benefits the enormous sum of \$201,329.79.

The usual loyal toasts were proposed, and the name of Mr. H. F. Gardiner of the *Times* was coupled with the toast of the Governor-General.

Mr. Gardiner, in the brief time at his disposal, gave entertaining sketches of a few of the Governors of Canada—the patriarchal Simcoe who built roads, selected town sites and designed public works; the military Colborne who was hanged in effigy in Hamilton in 1829 for not acceding to the request of the House of Assembly to release an editor from Toronto jail, and the Earl of Elgin, the constitutionalist who was stoned in Montreal 29 years later for signing the Rebellion Losses Bill in compliance with the wish of the majority of both Houses of Parliament. These incidents, he said, illustrated the growth of the idea of responsible government. With a passing reference to Lords Monck, Dufferin and Lorne, the speaker proceeded to Lord Aberdeen, whose proud boast it was that on a recent occasion he had been mistaken for a commercial traveller. In conclusion Mr. Gardiner asked to be enlightened with regard to the mysterious arts by which commercial travellers sold more goods to a customer than he could ever hope to pay for, and then squared themselves with their own governors when the notes for these goods fell due.

Messrs. J. M. Eagan and T. M. Davis sang "Larboard Watch," and Mr. John Leggat, "Truskalina Brown." Major J. Stoneman, Capt. Moore, and Capt. W. Hendrie (48th) responded to the toast of the "Army and Navy." The first named substituted his favorite recitation, "The Charge of the Light Brigade," for the usual speech. Capt. Moore's speech was capital. Capt. Hendrie succeeded Mr. Simpson, giving several interesting references to his own battalion (the Highlanders); and to the well-known prowess of the Scotch on the battlefields of the world.

"Canada, our Home," was responded to by Messrs. J. Madill and C. Murdoch. The former made an exceedingly patriotic speech. Canada was pre-eminent among the countries of the world in knowledge and morality. His hearers represented the backbone of the country. Mr. Murdoch believed that the commercial traveller had played no unimportant part in the welding together of this great Dominion. Wherever he goes throughout the length and breadth of the country he should endeavor to carry with him a good influence of loyalty towards Canada.

After the singing of the "Maple Leaf," by J. C. Taylor, with chorus by the company, the toast of "The Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada and Sister Associations," was enthusiastically honored. Mr. W. G. Reid, who has been identified with the C.T.A. since its organization, was the first to respond. He told of the early struggles of the association, when the membership was small and finances low, and referred to the past year as a hard one in the annals of the organization, in that no fewer than 30 deaths had occurred in its membership during that time. Commercial travellers were, in his opinion, the pioneers of civilization. Mr. T. M. Davis followed with a few humorous remarks about the practical side of

the commercial traveller's life, and Mr. Eagan sang the well-known "Drinking" song and chorus.

"Mercantile and Manufacturing Interests" was responded to by Messrs. H. N. Kittson, A. Munro and J. Black. Mr. Kittson spoke at some length, saying that while he did not think there was much in the present outlook to warrant any enthusiasm on the part of business men, and particularly wholesale dealers, still it was a matter for congratulation that Canadian credit was so good in both the United States and England.

Mr. Munro thought greater care should be taken by wholesale men in dealing with men in a small way of business, to know that these customers thoroughly understood their business, rather than that they had an excess of capital. This precaution would usually prevent serious losses.

Messrs. Mathieson and Taylor sang "The March of the Cameron Men," and received a double encore.

Messrs. W. Bremner and C. C. Baird responded to the toast of the "Commercial Benefactors." For the "Commercial Bachelors," Mr. Wm. Casey, of Detroit.

Several other members sang, and Mr. B. Arthurs presided at the piano.

The singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and the national anthem brought the gathering to a close at an early hour Saturday morning.

WESTERN ONTARIO COMMERCIAL
TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION.

The annual meeting of the Western Ontario Commercial Travellers' Association was held in the Masonic Temple, London, on Dec. 22nd last. Owing to the election of officers by acclamation the attendance was not so large as in former years. The retiring president, Mr. R. C. Struthers, occupied the chair. The annual statement placed the receipts for the year at \$20,246.43, the disbursements at \$13,287.15, making the balance \$6,959.28. The assets of the association now amount to \$33,478.86, and the liabilities \$2,079.09. The travelling members now number 906, and the associate members 47.

Mr. A. S. Tassie, in criticising the report, pointed out that the membership was less than that of last year. Mr. Dan McKenzie said that the cause of this was the action of the different railways in refusing to renew the tickets of a couple of hundred insurance men. Mr. Robinson said that 197 new members had been received during the year, and he thought the number compared favorably with the other associations. Three mortuary benefactions, amounting to \$2,000, have been paid during the year to the executors of the late D. H. Williams, T. P. G. Bryan and John E. Richards. Twenty-one claims for accident indemnity, amounting to \$950.24, were also paid. There are five claims for minor accidents and one for accidental death awaiting proof. The reserve fund now amounts to \$31,408.77, a gain for the year of \$4,320.43.

Several alterations and additions to by-laws proposed by Mr. Tassie were adopted. They related to accident benefits. The word "or by the taking of poison," in section 5, article 10, and the words "or suicide," in the same article, were eliminated. This means that when a man accidentally takes poison, or if he commits suicide while temporarily insane, the family will receive the amount of bonus carried by deceased. A clause was added whereby if a man should die solely from injuries received, but not within six months after receiving such injuries, his death shall be considered to be from natural causes and his heirs shall be entitled to the mortuary benefit. As the law stood before, unless a man died within six months after receiving the injuries his heirs could not claim the accident bonus; and as he did not die from natural causes there might be trouble over paying the mortuary benefit. The new clause definitely settles the question.

After the discussion of the by-laws, Mr. J. M. Dillon, president elect, assumed the presidency of the meeting. Mr. Tassie was accorded a vote of thanks for his work in relation to the by-laws, and in turn moved a vote of thanks to the retiring board. Mr. Struthers, P. J. Conroy and Dan McKenzie replied. The association intends holding a smoking concert on Friday, Jan. 18th next.

—For C. T. A. annual meeting see page 886 of this issue.

PULLMAN PALACE CAR CO.

The report of the Pullman Palace Car Company, for the year ending July 31st, 1894, has been published in pamphlet form. It shows gross earnings of \$9,595,066, a decrease of \$1,794,829 as compared with the previous year; disbursements, \$7,274,650, a decrease of \$108,798, and a net surplus of \$2,320,417, a decrease of \$1,686,031. The number of cars owned and controlled is 2,588. The number of passengers carried during the year was 5,282,323, and the number of miles run was 197,409,503. The total number of persons in the employ of the company in its manufacturing and operating departments is 10,858, and the wages paid during the year amounted to \$4,968,548. The number of employes for the previous year was 14,636 and the wages paid \$7,751,644. There was no substantial change in the condition of the car building business, and the contracts taken before the strike and those since the strike are being executed at prices which give no profit, and such contracts are taken because the shops are being kept in operation for the repairing of the company's own cars and to give as much employment as is possible in the present condition of business.

A SELF-CONTAINED AGENT.

The following is an extract from the Chicago letter published in the November *Insurance Monitor*:

"Mr. Bissell of the Hartford is still in the harness, and he can tell you many amusing anecdotes of early times. He often relates his experiences with an old friend of his away back in the sixties who lived in a little town somewhere up in Michigan. It seems he met his friend on the street one day and after considerable persuasion induced him to take an agency. So he loaded him up with supplies and sent him on his way. A month rolled around and no word from the new agent, when one morning he drifted into Mr. Bissell's office.

"Wall," he said, "I cum to settle up and git more supplies."

"More supplies?" queried the surprised Bissell. "Why, you didn't do any business?"

"Thort I did purty well," was the laconic reply. "I writ thirty policies, and paid two losses, one of \$700 an' tother of \$800, an' thar's the balance. I got it all writ down on this slip of paper," and he laid the money and paper before the now speechless manager.

It is needless to state that very, very explicit instructions accompanied the next batch of supplies that Mr. Bissell's friend received.

FIRE INSURANCE IN 1894.

The year 1894, fire insurance-wise, goes out in a blaze of glory, serious fires occurring in Toledo, Ohio, Louisville, Ky., Buffalo and New York; but, notwithstanding these expensive happenings, the year has been a good one for well-managed, old-established institutions. The 1894 fire loss will approximate \$127,500,000, a pleasant reduction from the 1893 figures, which were \$156,445,875.

The principal features of 1894, says the *Journal and Bulletin* of New York, were the failure of the Columbian Insurance Company of Louisville and the Burlington Insurance Company of Iowa, both stock companies, and the starting of about one hundred Lloyds and mutual companies to write "surplus" lines. No stock fire insurance corporation of any importance was started during 1894, although several are now projected, and some of these may materialize during the early part of 1895.

So many of the new surplus line concerns have been recklessly managed that failures promise to be numerous in 1895, and are apparently due to commence about March or April, with perhaps one or two even before then. There is no little curiosity about the condition of several of them, owing to the heavy losses they have incurred during the last quarter of 1894. The statements of nearly all of the institutions writing surplus business will be carefully studied by insurance brokers, particularly those who have not been very cautious in selecting policies for their customers, and now realize that they may be placed any day in an embarrassing position.

Taken altogether, 1894 has been as good a year as the old line fire underwriters have a right to expect. Rates have averaged higher than in 1893, and losses have been less. It is quite true that through poor judgment or bad