

ALCOHOL MAKES A BAD RISK.

Some particularly interesting points brought out by the recent medico-actuarial investigation were instanced by Mr. Arthur Hunter, actuary of the New York Life, at a recent underwriters' gathering in New York. He said all occupations and medical impairments had been handled by means of a code. He called attention to the fact that the normal mortality ratio is 100, and that anything below is better than average and anything above is below normal.

WOMEN AS RISKS.

He said that in the investigation an attempt was made to determine what classes of insured women were the best risks. There were two features in this connection, viz., the effect of medical selection and self selection, which must be taken into consideration. He also discussed the class of women who make their children beneficiaries and pay the premium out of their own pockets, on whom the mortality was apt to be good, and also cases of married women whose husbands pay the premium, who were usually not such good risks.

OCCUPATION STUDY.

Mr. Hunter said that 100 occupations were investigated, and only those which were expected to show a poor mortality were selected. In spite of this fact, there were numerous upsets in former beliefs. While the result of the investigation would not be to make companies more liberal in accepting risks as a whole, nevertheless it would make it possible for the companies to choose between certain classes in a way which would make the selection fairer among the different classes.

Discussing saloonkeepers and bartenders, he said the experience showed that any one connected at all in handling liquor was a risk much poorer than the normal. In the case of hotels where the proprietor did not tend bar the extra mortality was 35 per cent. Where they tended bar the extra mortality was 80 per cent. As a general proposition, the experience showed that where 300 men in ordinary occupations would die 200 extra would die in the liquor trade. Distillers, however, showed a ratio less than normal, and therefore no extra premium would be charged by companies. There was a 22 per cent. extra mortality in the wholesale liquor trade among proprietors and 50 per cent. extra mortality in the cases of restaurant proprietors who had bars attached to their business.

ALCOHOL BAD FOR HUMANS.

Mr. Hunter said the statistics of the mortality investigation proved conclusively that alcohol was bad for humanity. In the last few years experiments had been made to determine these questions. He told how two companies of soldiers had been experimented on, with the result that in every case those who did not use alcohol did more and better work than those taking alcohol even in small quantities. There was a marked deterioration in both the muscular and mental efficiency of the users of alcohol. The experience of the New England Mutual showed a 60 per cent. loss ratio among total abstainers, 85 per cent. among temperate and 125 per cent. ratio for moderate drinkers.

BRITISH COLUMBIA MUNICIPAL BORROWINGS TO BE SUPERVISED.**Details of New System—No Time for Municipal Luxuries.**

The proposed municipal department which is to be created by the British Columbia Government will investigate money by-laws passed by the cities and districts coming under the terms of the Act, and before debentures are offered for sale will stamp them with the approval of the government so that when they are placed before investors the latter may feel reasonably sure of their stability. This policy is in line with the legislative action of the Saskatchewan Legislature recently. The proposal met with some opposition in the Legislature. Mr. Parker Williams declared that its effect would be to make the municipalities simply appendages of the provincial government.

In addition to announcing the proposed establishment of a provincial municipal department which will exercise supervision over the sale of municipal bonds, make the debentures of a uniform type, audit municipal and school accounts, and state how sinking funds are to be invested, the Attorney General said that provision had been made for the establishment of a board of control in cities of over 15,000 population when such system of civic government was desired by the citizens.

In discussing the question of government supervision of municipal debentures he said in part:

ADVICE TO GO SLOW.

"I do not wish to be taken as meaning that the government has been at all suspicious of anything done by the municipalities in connection with public funds, nor that they have gone too far in connection with the by-laws they have submitted to the people. That, after all, is a matter for the majority of the people to settle for themselves. It may be that some of them have been a little enthusiastic over their future and perhaps during the last two years some by-laws have been submitted which were readily carried, but which they might find difficulty in carrying now under increased taxation. The fact that there has been a financial depression and that bonds have not been selling for as much as the municipalities might think they are worth, might have some effect in preventing them from rushing into further indebtedness. The fact is that this year we should be as conservative as possible in order to show the investing public in the Old Land that, so far as the government is concerned, we shall cause every protection to be thrown around the investing public in connection with the purchase of municipal debentures.

"It perhaps would not be out of place to suggest to the municipalities that this year at least they should go rather slow—slower than other years. It is a year perhaps in which they might well take their time in taking stock, to find out what their municipal indebtedness is, how they propose to pay it, and how they propose to carry on their further municipal development. This is a bad time for municipal debentures. Of course, we are glad to see now that the financial market is brightening, and we hope it will continue to get better. We feel, however, that we should not encourage the municipalities at this time in investing in any municipal luxuries."