

representatives of any certain individual a fixed sum at his death, in consideration of that person paying yearly, during his lifetime, certain definite sums according to his age at the time of forming the contract. As none of the insurance companies would take manifestly bad lives, the annual payments, based on such general calculations as those first-named, were enormously high. New companies sprang into existence with lower rates, the result of calculations based on selected lives. It was found that by selecting individuals free from physical ailments of any kind, in whose family—ancestral or present—there was entire absence of any hereditary taint, and whose occupation was not injurious; that lives such as these would, on an average, live a much longer time than was given in the tables of earlier date; and that consequently insurance companies would be able to insure such persons at very much lower rates.

Here it is that the services of the physician are of paramount importance. He it is that is relied upon to select the life and say whether or no it is a fit risk for the company to accept on some plan. Should he say the risk is not a safe one for insurance, giving, of course, good reason for his opinion, the risk will be at once declined. Should he consider the life a first-class one, and advise its acceptance, the medical referee and the actuary of the company will, by their combined experience, carefully consider the report of the medical examiner, reviewing the family as well as personal history of the applicant, taking into consideration his habits as regards the use of alcoholic beverages, and forming their own opinion as to the expectation of life. Their decision in regard to this will be acted upon whether it agrees or not with that of the medical examiner. Nevertheless the company will base their judgment on the answers to the questions put by the medical examiner to the applicant, as well as upon his own report of applicant's state of health. Indeed, it more frequently happens that rejections are the results of replies by applicant to questions put to him by the physician than of the report of applicant's present condition. Consequently the examination is not simply a scientific investigation of the applicant's present condition, but is one requiring tact and conscientious