

but throughout the country. Although the South African war has been a heavy drain on the monetary resources of England for now nearly a year, the above returns show that the deposits in the 16 leading banks, which have 1,975 branches in England only decreased by 1.58 per cent., and it is highly significant, as evidence of the recuperative power of the English money market, that, since January last, the deposits in the country banks have so considerably increased as to have gone ahead of the total in June, 1899.

THE PENN MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.

Chronological, reminiscent, statistical! The compiler of the condensed record of The Penn. Mutual Life Insurance Company, of Philadelphia, for a period of fifty years, may well claim that his work deserves to be thus described. He may also justly claim for his little volume that it is a very attractive specimen of the art of the printer and engraver. Commencing with a reference to the belief of John W. Hornor, the founder of the Penn. Mutual, that a company organized on the same lines as the better class of English corporations would be a success, the history continues to be interesting from the incorporation in 1847 to the year 1897, when Mr. Lippincott's compilation was produced. The modest beginning of the company could not be better described than by the mention of the fact that the first office of the Penn. Mutual was 'hardly fifteen feet square,' and the entire working force consisted of the founder and secretary, and a porter who ran errands and "cleaned up the room" in consideration of having the use of the basement for storing tea, in which he dealt. To-day the total assets of the Company, which commenced so humbly, exceed \$40,000,000, and the amount of policies in force are approaching \$200,000,000.

There is a somewhat saddening reminder of the brevity of life in the record at the close of this interesting work. Of the first hundred ordinary life policies issued by the Penn. Mutual, only five remain. The pictures of the holders of these policies are given, and the fate of the remaining 95 policies is thus set forth in a table:—

By death, 44; by surrender, 27; by lapse, 24.

The average number of premiums paid on the entire 100 policies was 18.9; the average number of premiums paid on all the surviving and all the policies paid as death claims was 28. During the fifty years under review, the Company paid out for death claims alone over twenty millions of dollars. In view of the possible entry of the Penn. Mutual into Canada, these few gleanings from the interesting story of its rise and progress may prove interesting to our readers.

AN ASSESSMENT LIFE DEAL.

A deal was closed a few days ago in the consolidation of the Northwestern Life Assurance Company of Chicago with the Mutual Reserve Fund Life Association of New York.

The contract with the Mutual Reserve, by which all of the 30,000 members of the Northwestern are taken over without medical examination, is said to place all of the members upon an equality. It stipulates that "assessment" certificate holders shall accept the new legal reserve requirement, this being a condition precedent to acceptance.

The plan is approved by the Insurance Departments of Illinois, Nebraska and Texas. Deputy J. J. Brinkerhoff and Chief Clerk J. W. Vance, of the Illinois Department, Commissioner Jefferson Johnson of Texas and Deputy Commissioner W. B. Price, of Nebraska, were present at the special meeting held in Chicago, to approve the terms of consolidation.

We find from the Illinois Insurance Report for 1900 that the Northwestern claimed a total income during last year of \$4,173,719, and total disbursements of \$1,590,987.

LIABILITY OF TRADERS' DIRECTORS.

Fire underwriters are looking forward with interest to definite and official information as to whether the directors of the bankrupt Traders Fire Insurance Company are to be brought into court by proceedings to test their liability to the unfortunate creditors of the defunct institution. During the lifetime of the company it traded largely on the names of its directors, its capital being small for the business it did. It will be remembered that the letter-heads of the company were emblazoned with names of the full Board of Directors in bold type, a quite unusual proceeding. There are few companies which did not lose more or less policies to the Traders, which the assured transferred to it because of the high standing of the gentlemen who composed its directorate. The question which now remains to be settled is whether these directors are liable, and if so, to what extent, and on what grounds.

The January 1, 1900, statement of the company was clearly false in material points, but its falsity would be available only in a suit brought by a creditor, who placed or renewed insurance in the Traders of New York, or otherwise dealt with it since that date. To benefit prior givers of credit or dealers it must be shown that the company was not what it was represented to be in advance of their giving it their confidence. Any investigation in this direction may delve into the matter of the Traders' Fire Lloyds reinsurance of its business in the Traders Fire Insurance Company, and the ade-