ing, No. 111 Broadway. Its great height, twenty-one stories, which would ordinarily mean very costly insurance, is counterbalanced by the character of construction, and the rate is only 12 cents per hundred dollars. Architects and engineers are considering as never before the isolation of each floor from the others, the limiting of areas, the utmost possible elimination of well holes, and the enclosing of stairways.

THE SOVEREIGN BANK OF CANADA.

Only a body of shareholders imbued with a sense of duty to the general public, would so harmoniously have assented to the drastic measures adopted at the annual meeting of the Sovereign Bank held in Toronto on Tuesday of this week.

The action taken was confirmatory of the recommendation made by the president, Mr. Æmelius Jarvis, and the recently appointed general manager, Mr. F. G. Jemmett—and it evidenced the strong confidence which is felt by the shareholders in the wisdom of the new management. The reorganization plan thus effected is on the side of extreme conservatism. Indeed, some surprise is expressed that the shareholders were not inclined to attempt weathering the storm without quite so thorough a stripping of canvas. But it is well that any possible erring in the matter should be upon the side of abundant security, and certain it is that public confidence will now be attracted and held, to a degree that could not have been hoped for by the adoption of any temporizing policy or half way measures. And, doubtless, the stockholders themselves share with the public a sense of relief that the worst is known and passed. The basis of absolute safety upon which the bank's affairs now rest, together with the recognized ability and experience of the management, assure for it a successful future. The history of other banks in Canada has proved that financial institutions, like individuals, may make "stepping stones to higher things" of past misfortunes; and the shareholders of the Sovereign are to be congratulated that they have taken heroic measures whereby the bank has worked out its own salvation, rather than listen to any overtures regarding absorption.

The outline of the bank's history and of its recent condition and reorganization, as narrated with clearness and candour by the president and general manager, is given elsewhere in our columns. The Sovereign had undoubtedly a phenomenal growth; formed wide connections, obtained large deposits, and effected an extensive branch organization. But its career lends point to the moral that banking, above all things, must be conducted on an essentially conservative basis. Otherwise, at the very time when funds become most necessary they may prove not available.

The recommendations of the new management, as adopted by the shareholders, involve the following changes. There is written off for bad debts $700,655; for depreciation in securities $150,607; and for reduction in bank premises and furniture, $48,109. In addition to the foregoing, the sum of $541,494 is being set aside in contingent fund for accounts which are in liquidation, or in which there is an element of doubt; and a further contingent fund of $800,000 is provided in respect of certain unsatisfactory advances, the outcome of which is not clear at present. The doing of this necessitates appropriating the entire rest fund of $1,255,950, and also reducing the paid-up capital from $4,000,000 to $3,000,000 After this there remains $25,252 to carry forward in the profit and loss account of the current year. Disappointing as the whole matter must be to the shareholders, there is comfort in knowing that the remedy while severe cannot but be wholly efficacious. There is a degree of comfort too in the expressed hope of so conservative a judge as Mr. Jemmett, that the securities held against some or all of the debts so amply provided for, may before long work into a better position, thus making possible the liquidation of the greater part of the debts against which they are held. If this should prove to be the case, the bank would be able to transfer from time to time a substantial portion of its contingent fund into a rest account. Mr. Jemmett sums up the immediate business outlook admirably when he says:

"We are now making a new start. We have paid-up capital of $3,000,000, all of which is absolutely intact. We have deposits amounting to more than four times our capital. And in these, and in the excellent business connections at home and abroad which we have, we possess an extremely valuable asset."

Counting as it does among its shareholders, Messrs. Pierpont Morgan & Co., and the Dresdner Bank, who together hold 15,000 out of 40,000 shares, the Sovereign Bank is assured of the strongest backing. It is understood that Mr. Æmelius Jarvis as president will unstintedly devote his recognized ability and financial experience to the affairs of the bank. The record of Mr. F. G. Jemmett during his long connection with the Canadian Bank of Commerce and more especially as secretary to General Manager Walker of late years, is assurance of able and progressive work in the general managership of the Sovereign. And in this connection, the Canadian Bank of Commerce is to be complimented in its giving up to its younger rival, not only the valued services of Mr. Jemmett, but also those of Mr. Robert Cassels and Mr. A. H. B. Mackenzie, whose indefatigable work since being appointed inspectors was referred to with deservedly marked appreciation at the annual meeting. With such experienced banking officials as the president, general manager, inspectors Cassels and Mackenzie and others, the Sovereign Bank cannot but have the confidence of the public and of bankers generally; and the management and shareholders state emphatically that there is no intention of the institution being acquired by any larger bank. It is now placed on a solid basis and has, with the business and connections already formed, a good future before it.

FIRE AT OTTAWA.

A fire occurred in the Church of the Sacred Heart on the 10th instant, causing a total loss. The following companies are interested:

Royal	$15,000	Montreal-Canada	$5,000
Alliance	10,000	London Mutual	5 000
Queen City	10,000	Richmond	5,000
Anglo American	10,000	Ottawa	4,000
Equity	7,500	Ontario	3 000
Standard	6,000	Queen	2,500
Phœnix of Hartford	6,000	Traders	2 500
		Total loss	$91,500

(Insurance News on page 789.)