

After justice had been done to a well-selected menu, and the health of the King had been duly honored, the toast of the day, "Success to the Quebec Assurance Company," was proposed by Mr. John Theo. Ross, in a felicitous speech. He alluded to the age of the company, the oldest fire office in the Canadas, and spoke of its useful and honorable career in Quebec. Mr. Thomas H. Norris, a director of the company, replied on its behalf. He said the original building, in a reconstruction of which they were then assembled, was commenced in 1821, the company having begun business three years previously, in 1818. Its first serious loss was in 1826 in connection with which the minutes record that the company "lost its small engine and several buckets, and the deputy-secretary, in whose charge they were, escaped at the risk of his life. Its largest losses were \$185,000, in May, 1845; \$200,000, in 1866; \$125,000, in 1870, and \$362,000, in 1881. The last mentioned fire the speaker particularly remembered; it was small at first, but was allowed to spread through the jealousy of two rival hose companies. Mr. Norris gave an amusing account of his experiences in helping an old woman to save her stove, when his Sunday raiment suffered considerably. He thought the Quebec Fire Assurance Company has amply fulfilled the object for which it was established, the protection of useful domestic enterprises, and has reasonable claim to the continued and active support of the citizens of Quebec.

In resuming his seat, amid applause, Mr. Norris proposed the toast of "Success to the London and Lancashire," of Liverpool, the Quebec's big brother, which had done it many friendly turns and to whose countenance and assistance the reconstruction of the building was largely due.

Mr. Alfred Wright, of Toronto, chief agent of the London and Lancashire, responded, and after reading a letter from Mr. Rutter, his general manager, regretting his inability to be present, gave some particulars of the early history of the company, and its marked success during late years. Its annual income was now close upon \$6,500,000, and it offered a total security of \$19,135,000, which sum was pledged for the safety of the Quebec's patrons, whose policies it guaranteed. They had the advantage of the strength of an English office with the convenience of a local institution familiar with the citizens and their requirements. He concluded by congratulating the citizens on Quebec's evident prosperity, and expressed best wishes for its continuance.

The health of the chairman, proposed by Thomas F. Dobbin, of Montreal, and duly responded to, concluded a pleasant gathering.

The building as reconstructed is five stories high, and of Deschambault stone and Scotch firebrick with dressed stone embellishment and carving. The roof is double and of an improved form, but little used yet in Quebec, calculated to carry a great weight of snow with safety. The heating is by hot water furnaces, with radiators on the latest single supply system. Ventilation has been carefully provided for, while the electric installation is very complete. Lavatory accommodation of the latest type is provided on every floor. The elevator is a high speed triplex hydraulic, with electric prime motor. The architects were the well-known firm of Hutchison & Wood, Montreal. The building contains nineteen well-lit and convenient offices. The "Quebec's" own office is on the first floor; the Merchants' Bank occupy spacious and handsome premises on the street level, and the remainder of the building is tenanted by leading legal, financial and agency firms.



TORONTO INSURANCE INSTITUTE DINNER.

A banquet to mark the opening of the sixth session of the Insurance Institute of Toronto was held at the King Edward Hotel on Tuesday evening last, 11th October. It was a pleasing and memorable entertainment. It is not given to every dinner committee to bring together from points five hundred miles apart 130 persons, to give them a dinner of nine courses, to treat them to eight speeches and six songs, to Radnor water and cigars, and to send them home promptly at midnight. But this is what the entertainment committee of the Institute managed to do. The president, Mr. F. Sanderson, F.F.A., of the Canada Life, was in the

chair. At the same table with him were the vice-president, Mr. C. C. Foster, Mr. S. R. Tarr, secretary; Messrs. Byron E. Walker, T. L. Morrissey, (Montreal); A. McDougald, Montreal; J. L. Blaikie, Thos. Hilliard, (Guelph); J. K. Macdonald, Col. W. C. Macdonald, Arthur J. Hughes, F. J. Lightbourn, J. Maughan, Leopold Goldman, J. F. Junkin, Robt. Junkin, P. C. H. Papps, E. E. Reid, (London); H. C. Cox, Dr. J. F. W. Ross, E. Williams, and G. B. Woods.

The chairman in proposing the first toast, "The Institute and Sister Institutes," sketched in a brief way its career since 1899 until now it has a membership of 400. He also cited voluntary testimony given by well known people in the insurance world to the value of the work the body is doing. In responding to the toast Mr. T. L. Morrissey, president of the Montreal Insurance Institute, discussed the Fire Insurance situation. His address was that of an observant man who has thought out his subject. He struck out freely at amateur insurance men and would-be insurance critics, but some of his glancing blows had the assuaging salve of humor in them. Mr. J. K. Macdonald, of the Confederation Life Association, proposed the toast of "Accident and Guarantee Insurance," and dwelt upon the importance of these departments of the business. In responding Mr. Frank J. Lightbourn, of the Canadian Accident and Guarantee Company, illustrated their remarkable growth of these branches. Introducing the toast of "Life Assurance," Mr. J. L. Blaikie, of the North American Life, made a very earnest statement of its beneficence and importance, closing with some fatherly advices to the young men of the Institute. The response of Mr. Thomas Hilliard, of the Dominion Life, showed an excellent knowledge of the business, and the readiness of one who can adapt his speech or story to his audience. The last toast, that of "Fire Insurance," having been reached, the chairman called upon Mr. B. E. Walker, the well-known banker, to propose it. That gentleman, disclaiming any minute or technical knowledge of his subject, spoke of the apparent lack of any scientific basis of rates in fire-underwriting, such as that upon which the life-underwriters depend. He suggested rather than asserted that fire rates of late in Canada had not been high enough, and hinted a doubt of their absolute consistency. In closing he advised the fire insurance students of to-day to aid the profession in getting together from their own study or experience such a body of facts and statistics as would enable the proper measuring of risks to be accepted. Mr. C. C. Foster, of the Western Assurance Company, urged the serious consideration of the troublous features of the situation, and the need of approaching these difficulties in a spirit of self-respect and mutual confidence. The occasion was a most agreeable one, the viands excellent, the singing much above the ordinary, both as regards the selections and the manner of their rendition. The members of the entertainment committee are Messrs. R. Junkin, E. Marshall, J. A. Shaw, and H. A. Sherrard, convener.



THE CARD SYSTEM IN LIFE ASSURANCE OFFICES.

The system of keeping newspaper subscribers, names and accounts on cards, of keeping small or transient store accounts on cards, instead of in elaborate books of account, has a number of points to commend it. The system has been found both serviceable and economical by life assurance companies also. And in order that its use in this direction may be made more fully known to insurance managers, we have prevailed upon a gentleman in an assurance office, who has tested the system by lengthened use, to favor us with a description of its working. It may be premised that this card system, as the method of keeping track of business by means of cards instead of in books is called, is gaining in favor from year to year.

The growing use of the card method is especially noticeable amongst the large life assurance companies. In the Canada Life office, for example, there are over a dozen different sets of cards in daily use, cards of different colors and sizes, and with different spaces for different kinds of data. In describing some of these sets of cards, it would not be possible in a limited space to go into detail and describe all the data