

accounts showing an excess premium income of £178,000.

Apparently fire insurance is not a particularly lucrative business. Taking the 20 companies who do the bulk of this business in Great Britain it is found that during the last five years, their net premiums were £116,756,759, while their trading accounts show a surplus of premiums over claims and expenses of £6,215,815 or 5.37 p.c. Allowing for the increased reserve required owing to the fact that during the five years the premium income increased by nearly two millions, the profit is not much better than 4¾ p.c. Nearly two-thirds of the actual dividends paid now come from investments.

METRO.

London, 9th October, 1909.

From Western Fields.

ALBERTA'S HONOURS AT SEATTLE.

Exposition Award of Gold Medal—Railroad Development for British Columbia and the Prairie Provinces—Rapid Movement of Grain this Year thus Far.

The award of a gold medal to Alberta's provincial exhibit at Seattle, and of a grand prize to the Canadian Pacific's agricultural display at the exposition, indicate somewhat the attractiveness which the Canadian West has for our neighbours across the line. This latest Alberta triumph follows close upon the success of George Lane, who, with his Bow Valley Percherons, swept the board at Seattle.

Thousands of tourists from the eastern and middle sections of the United States this year passed through the Canadian West on their way to or from the Yukon-Alaska Exhibition at Seattle. The benefits that are promised to Canada as a result of this "free advertising" make Winnipeg the more determined to carry through its Selkirk Centennial to success. British Columbia is expected to join heartily in the project. Premier McBride promised to call a special meeting of the cabinet for this week to decide as to the buildings and exhibits to be contributed by that province. The Government of Saskatchewan has declined to make any cash grant towards the project or to do more than provide a creditable exhibit of the resources of the province. The great value the exposition would be to the West is acknowledged, but the Government feels that it could not make any substantial grant of provincial funds to such an enterprise when such large amounts are urgently required for development of the province, providing roads, bridges, and other requirements for the settlers already there.

According to Assistant Land Commissioner Doupe, of the C.P.R., the sale of town lots by the company for the past nine months had been 250 per cent. greater than for the corresponding nine months in the previous year. He also reports the sale of farm lands to have been 50 per cent. greater for the same period. Most of this land he said was

sold to actual settlers, and there was little sold for speculative purposes.

The McBride Railway Policy.

The British Columbia Legislature has duly dissolved and elections will be held on November 25th. Just before dissolution an agreement was signed between the Government and the Canadian Northern Railway, whereby it is stipulated that the company construct six hundred miles of railway from Yellowhead Pass to Vancouver within four years at 4 per cent., the security being a first mortgage on the road in the province. The company's plans as specified in the agreement also include the construction of a railroad across Vancouver Island to Barclay Sound, where the company will establish an ocean port on one of the finest harbours on the island.

On the mainland the company builds southward from Yellowhead Pass to a point near New Westminster, thence connecting with Vancouver. The line will pass through Kamloops on a route following the south bank of the Fraser river. A car ferry will connect the mainland with Vancouver Island. The C. N. R. will take over the charter of the Victoria & Barclay Sound Railway, which was projected from Victoria to Barclay Sound, the proposed island terminus of the C.N.R.

It is practically on this railway policy that the McBride Government will go to the country.

Judging by the notices of application to be made at Ottawa by the Canadian Northern during the coming session, this enterprising line is going to be extremely active all through West from now on. Authorization for no less than eleven new lines is to be asked for, and extension of time is sought in the case of many others.

Is it a German Invasion?

While the C. N. R. is doing and planning so much, its management take time to deny some of the projects imputed to it. One of its officials stated this week that the report that Mackenzie & Mann were interested with Germans in a \$10,000,000 purchase of Brazeau coal fields in Alberta, was incorrect. For several years, he stated, that road, or interests closely allied with it, had held several thousand acres of coal lands in the Brazeau region, and that the rest of the story was moonshine, so far as they were concerned.

As instancing the saving in time that new transportation routes may effect, The Montreal Gazette cites a case in point:

"On the completion of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway through to Prince Rupert, B.C., the time spent in reaching the East from Alaska and the great Northwest coast will be reduced by several days. In travelling from Alaska to Chicago or the East by the G.T.P. route the passenger will be able to take train at Prince Rupert and be in Chicago on the same day that the steamship which he quitted at Prince Rupert arrives in Seattle, a saving of three days."

The active work of locating the line of the Hudson Bay Railway commenced this week, when W. J. Clifford with a large party began work at the Pass Mission. Other parties will be sent out later