

THE DOMINION BANK.

The annual meeting of the Dominion Bank was held at the Head Office, Toronto, on 29th inst., the President, Mr. E. B. Osler, in the chair. The past year is shown in the report, which will be found on a later page, to have been the most profitable in the bank's history. The net profits were \$275,192, as compared with \$214,342 last year, and \$205,326 in 1898. Some portion of the increase was derived from the additional capital paid up during the year and the premiums thereon. The dates of these payments would be required to make such calculations as would credit them fairly with their share of earnings. The net profits, however, equal 11.28 per cent. of the paid-up capital. The premium paid on new stock amounted to \$940,291, which was added to Reserve Fund, raising it to \$2,440,291 so that the paid-up capital and the reserve fund are of the same amount. The 4 quarterly dividends, aggregating 10½ per cent. for the year, absorbed \$205,766, and \$30,000 written off bank premises' account, leaving \$38,426, of the profits to be added to balance of profit and loss, which is carried forward to extent of \$100,482. The Dominion has always stood high as regards immediately available assets, which at date of statement amounted to \$11,758,647, which is over 63 per cent. of the total deposits, the amount of these funds held by the Dominion Bank being \$18,577,617. The circulation is now \$317,970 in excess of same date 1900, and \$290,639 larger than it could have been had the paid-up capital remained as it was a year ago. The new President had the honor of appending his first signature to the annual statement which is the most gratifying the Dominion Bank has yet issued. We trust he will have a long series of such pleasant experience.

SUN FIRE OFFICE.

Any eulogy of the Sun Insurance Office is like gilding refined gold or painting the lily. There is but one Sun, and Mr. Blackburn is its manager in Canada. The Sun was in business before the first King George came to the throne. Its quaint metal badge or sign has looked out on celebrations of the accession to the throne of seven British monarchs for close upon 200 years. Yet its vitality is still developing, as the statement on a later page evidences. The total sum insured at close of last year was \$2,250,000,000, which is \$442,500,000 more than it was 10 years ago. The net premiums received in 1900 were \$5,352,737, the net losses, \$3,151,926, the ratio losses to premiums being 58.89 per cent. The Sun has assets to extent of \$10,521,549. Such enormous figures are difficult to realize; they convey, however, an impression of financial

strength beyond risk of being weakened by the vicissitudes of the fire insurance business. The company has \$200,000 deposited with the Dominion Government, more as a matter of form than necessity, for its policyholders' sake, for the Sun Office in London could pay any claim that could possibly arise against it in Canada as easily as the average citizen pays for his lunch. Mr. Blackburn has built up a good business for this famous institution, which he is maintaining and enlarging by careful attention alike to the interests of the company and those of its policyholders.

A LESSON FROM JACKSONVILLE.

The terrible fire at Jacksonville, Florida, which destroyed from 10 to 12 millions of dollars worth of property, is another lesson regarding the folly of restricting fire insurance within an narrow area. There are complaints constantly arising against fire companies for charging higher rates than the losses in some districts appear to justify. The "Smart Alecks" of a locality put the gross amount of premiums collected therein during same year, then compared their total with the aggregate losses in the same period, the balance or excess of premiums being declared to be profits. Even when critics have sense enough to reduce this balance by an allowance for expenses, the residue is still claimed to be net profits, the element of unearned premiums being ignored, and the necessity overlooked of making provision for some future calamity. The idea that each locality should only pay the cost of the fire insurance within its limits is very prevalent in places where fires have caused an exceptionally small loss. We have, however, never heard of a city or town declining to receive indemnity for losses in excess of the local premiums. That is another story. The local idea is: "heads I win, tails you lose." If our premiums largely exceed the losses in any period, then such excess shows exorbitant rates, but, when the losses greatly exceed the premiums, the companies are expected to pay up all claims from some mysterious source. According to the theory that, within a certain locality each year's rates of insurance ought to be only sufficient to cover each year's losses and expenses, it follows that, when these losses in that locality are excessive, owing to a conflagration, the policyholders therein ought to be levied upon by the companies in order to raise their receipts to the level of the losses and expenses, with a margin for profits. This would create a delightful situation, as the policyholders whose properties had been destroyed would have to rely upon their immediate neighbours to make up the deficiency so created. If the conflagration were a general one, if all the policy-