

THE WESTERN ASSURANCE COMPANY.

The Annual Meeting of the Shareholders of this company was held at its offices in Toronto on Thursday, February 25th Mr. A. M. Smith, president, occupied the chair, and Mr. J. J. Kenny, managing director, was appointed to act as secretary to the meeting. The secretary read the following annual report:

The directors beg to submit herewith their annual report showing the transactions of the company for the past year, together with a statement of its assets and liabilities on 31st December last.

The premium income, it will be observed, was \$1,754,262.25, after deducting the amount paid for re-insurance, and the receipts for interest on investments were \$43,732.78.

Although no serious conflagrations have occurred during the year, fire losses, both in Canada and the United States, have been unusually numerous and severe, bringing the ratio of losses to premiums considerably above the average of ordinary years.

In the marine branch the volume of business has been somewhat less than in 1890, but the year's transactions have resulted more satisfactorily.

While the profit balance of \$40,120.67 is much less than that shown in the preceding annual balance sheet, your directors feel that in view of the unfavorable results of the fire business for the year 1891 to companies generally, there is cause for congratulation in the fact that the excess of income over expenditure, with the balance at the credit of profit and loss account, enabled them to pay two half-yearly dividends at the rate of 10 per cent. per annum upon the paid-up capital without drawing upon the company's ample reserve fund of \$900,000. The amount estimated as necessary to re-insure or run off all existing risks is \$578,654.19. Deducting this from the total surplus funds of the company, a net surplus of \$325,527.17 is shown over capital and all other liabilities.

One important result from the generally adverse experience in fire underwriting for the year 1891 has been the withdrawal of a number of companies from the business. The risks of these retiring companies have been assumed by other and stronger companies, so that in no case have the policy-holders been sufferers; while the terms on which the business has been taken over have, in most instances, been such as will permit the winding up of the companies without loss to the stockholders. The natural effect of these withdrawals will be the concentration of the business among a smaller number of offices, and concerted action where necessary, to place it upon a more satisfactory basis. These movements, with a return to a normal loss ratio, which may be reasonably looked for, must eventually result favorably to the companies remaining in the field.

STATEMENT OF BUSINESS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST

DECEMBER, 1891.

Revenue Account.

Fire premiums.....	\$1,414,109 97
Marine premiums.....	607,970 31
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Less re-assurance	\$2,022,680 28
	267,518 03
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	\$1,754 262 25
Interest account	43,732 78
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	81,797 995 03
Fire losses, including an appropriation for all losses reported to Dec. 31st, 1891.....	\$45,655 50
Marine losses, including an appropriation for all losses reported to Dec. 31st, 1891.....	310,757 97
General expenses, agents' commission, etc	571,460 89
Balance to Profit and Loss.....	40,120 67
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Profit and Loss Account.

Dividend No. 60	\$ 25,000 00
Dividend No. 61.....	25,000 00
Sundry accounts written off.....	2,125 70
Balance.....	4,181 36
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	856,307 06
Balance from last year.....	16,186 39
Profit for the year.....	40,120 67
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	856,307 06

Liabilities.

Capital stock, paid up.....	\$ 500,000 00
Losses under adjustment.....	122,645 75
Dividend payable January 8, 1892.....	25,000 00
Reserve Fund.....	\$900,000 00
Balance Profit and Loss.....	4,181 36
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	904,181 36
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	81,551,827 09

Assets.

United States and State bonds	\$ 451,795 00
Dominion of Canada stocks.....	211,417 50
Loan company and bank stocks.....	181,181 70
Company's building	65,000 00
Debentures.....	95,490 35
Cash on hand and on deposit.....	191,064 05
Bills receivable.....	46,601 08
Mortgages.....	6,834 88
Re-assurances	38,392 82
Interest due and accrued.....	5,291 13
Agents' balances and sundry accounts.....	255,758 58
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81,551,827 09

A. M. SMITH, President.

J. J. KENNY, Managing Director.

TORONTO, February 16th, 1892.

AUDITORS' REPORT.

To the President and Directors of the Western Assurance Company:

GENTLEMEN,—We hereby certify that we have audited the books of the company for the year ending 31st December, 1891, and have examined the vouchers and securities in connection therewith, and find the same carefully kept, correct, and properly set forth in the above statement.

R. R. CATHRON,
JOHN M. MARTIN, F.C.A., } Auditors.

TORONTO, February 16th, 1892.

In moving the adoption of the report the president said:—

The annual report of the directors which has just been read, with its accompanying statements of the accounts of the company, presenting as they do a clear synopsis of the past year's business and its results, render unnecessary any lengthened remarks or explanations from me. Compared with the figures of the preceding year, you will have noticed a moderate and satisfactory gain in the net premium income, a considerable increase in the amount of losses incurred, and a marked reduction from the handsome profit balance which we were able to show as the result of our operations for the year 1890; and yet, notwithstanding this diminution in the profits on the business transacted last year, those of us who have watched from month to month the fiery record of 1891, and have noted the inroads which in many instances it has made into the surplus funds which companies have accumulated in more prosperous years, cannot but feel that we are exceptionally fortunate in making so favorable a showing as is presented to you to-day. To fire insurance companies the past year has proved a veritable "Waterloo," and, in addition to winding up a number of smaller American companies, we, as Canadians, must regret that it has resulted in the retirement of two of our own companies, which have re-insured their risks with offices whose wider experience leads them to look beyond the records of such an exceptional year as the past one has proved.

The effect of this reduction in the number of competitors for business, judging from our own receipts thus far for the present year, is already being felt in the increased volume of premiums of the remaining companies; and while, in a business such as ours, subject to a large extent to elements beyond human control, it is impossible to forecast the probable results of any one year, we may safely rely upon the law of average asserting itself, and may fairly assume that by conducting our business on lines laid down by past experience and adhering to a policy of just and liberal treatment of our insurers, we shall in the future, as we have heretofore, earn fair profits for our shareholders upon their capital.

A full consideration of the present conditions and prospects of the business, which I have briefly outlined, has led the directors to consider the question of increasing the capital stock of the company; and believing that such action will be advantageous at the present time in strengthening, in proportion to the growth of its business, the financial position of a home institution which already stands high in public confidence, they have taken advantage of the present gathering of its shareholders to call a special meeting at the close of this regular meeting to approve, as required by the act of incorporation, of an additional issue of stock.

I cannot close without bearing testimony to the zeal and watchful care manifested by our managing director in conducting the business of the company, and the efficient manner in which the other officers have fulfilled their respective duties during an unusually trying year, and expressing our appreciation of the active and loyal services of the managers of our various branch offices and the agents of the company generally throughout its wide field of operations.

Mr. George A. Cox, vice-president of the company, said:—

In seconding the adoption of the report last year (when, after