

issued at once by the bank, so that it would be immediately available as security. The warrant would be merely a temporary affair, to be surrendered when the stock was issued. The opinion is expressed by some that such a step would open the door to speculators manipulating the warrants in such a manner as to injure the interests of the original shareholders.

It may interest our banking readers to know that, since the passage of the gold standard and refunding act of March 14, 1900, which made the organization of National banks easier and more profitable on smaller capital, 2,550 of those institutions have been established in the United States. This is nearly one-half of the entire present number. That act permitted for the first time the organization of National banking associations with capital below \$50,000, and as low as \$25,000, in places of not more than 3,000 inhabitants. Of the newly organized banks in these five years 1,653 are of this class. The New York Journal of Commerce, commenting on this fact and on the smallness of the capital possessed by some of them, says that the United States banking system is subject to two prime weaknesses, inadequate capital for the business undertaken and insufficient reserves held against deposit liabilities.

Every now and then the proposition comes up to make the payment of bank dividends quarterly instead of half-yearly. It is pointed out that many of the chief railway, traction and industrial properties have in the past few years decided to make quarterly payments, and the change has been greatly appreciated by investors. Stockbrokers in particular claim that such a change would work very considerable benefit. No doubt it would—from the broker's point of view. Also, from the investor's, because it is always better to have money coming in at the end of three months (or one month) instead of having to wait six months. From the banker's point of view, however, we fail to see where the advantage comes in. The work of the clerical staff would be greatly increased, but except in very small degree, where the change might be appreciated by a section of the stockholders, it would be without adequate return in benefit.

Fuller accounts are now to hand regarding the Hudson's Bay Company operations for the year ending May 31st last. The trading profits amounted to £162,969 in 1905 and £98,934 in 1904, or an increase of £4,035, while the land profits were £187,364 in 1905, £179,047 in 1904, an increase of £8,317. The total profits, 1905, £290,233, and in 1904, £277,981, or an increase of £12,352. The dividends paid last year amounted to 56s. per share, or 29 per cent., as compared with 35s., or 17½ per cent., in the previous year, in which year £1 per share capital was returned to the shareholders. The average price for farm lands has been steadily increasing, as follows: 1899, \$4.88; 1900, \$4.98; 1901, \$4.96; 1902, \$5.08; 1903, \$5.66; 1904, \$6.15; 1905, \$6.17. The company, under an arrangement made in 1902, reserved 1,500,000 acres of land, providing that the proceeds of sales of any land in excess of the reserve should be distributed as a dividend. The company holds nearly 2,500,000 acres in excess of the reserve referred to. It is believed by shareholders that, owing to the heavy immigration into the North-West now going on, the profits from land sold will show a largely increasing profit. It should be borne in mind, however, that the amount of sales should not be confused with receipts, as payments are generally spread over a term of years.

FIRE INSURANCE ITEMS.

The Phoenix Fire Insurance Company have appointed Messrs. Ridout & Strickland as their Toronto agents.

Mr. E. S. Clouston and Sir Alex. Lacoste have been elected president and vice-president respectively of the Manitoba Assurance Company.

Mr. Lansing Lewis, Canadian manager of the Caledonian Fire Insurance Company, Edinburgh, Scotland, has returned to Montreal after a visit to the home office.

Mr. E. S. Clouston has been elected chairman of the Canadian board of directors of the Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company in place of the late Mr. W. J. Euchanan.

The resignation is announced of Mr. P. M. Wickham as Canadian manager of the Alliance Assurance Company, which some time ago absorbed the Imperial. He will be succeeded by Mr. T. D. Belfield, of New York, who was formerly American agent for the Imperial, and is known as an energetic business man. Mr. Wickham had had long experience in the insurance business, and has the good wishes of all who know him. It is understood that Hon. Mr. Thibaudeau, one of the directors of the Alliance, also retires.

The report of the Montreal fire alarm department for the first six months of the present year shows an increase of six fires, as compared with the corresponding period of 1904, an increase of eleven alarms, and a falling off in the number of malicious false alarms by nine. The loss of life was fortunately much less than last year, only six having died as a result of fires, while during the first six months of last year fifteen lives were lost. During the six months the brigade used 516 streams and 508 hand extinguishers. The steam fire engines were used sixty-four times, and the chemical engines only three times. The water tower worked at two fires, and buckets of water were sufficient to extinguish forty-nine small fires. During the first six months of the year there were 430 fires, 216 alarms, 90 false alarms and 11 automatic false alarms; total, 747.

The Royal Insurance Company announces an important change in its Toronto agency. Messrs. John Kay and A. F. Banks, who for the past thirty years have been general agents of the company, have been retired on a liberal pension, and Messrs. Maguire & Connors and Parkes & McVittie have been appointed general agents of the company in Toronto and vicinity. All these gentlemen are well and favorably known in insurance and business circles. Mr. Maguire has been associated with the company for many years as special agent, and Mr. Connors has been city agent of the Ottawa Fire Insurance Company for a number of years. For some time past Mr. Parkes has been associated with the Royal Insurance Company as general agent, and Mr. McVittie for fourteen years has been connected with the British America and the Manitoba Assurance Companies.

The Firemen's Record draws attention to the unsatisfactory nature of specific policies on pianos. The sentimental value added by the young lady owner to the actual cost of the instrument should not be considered by the agent in fixing the amount to be written on a piano; but there are so many instances of a piano purchased on the instalment plan for \$450 and interest, to be paid up in three years, being covered for the total instalment cost and interest, that were it not for the good moral hazard of the honest owner, half of the pianos on books, written specifically, would, it declares, melt into loss claims. Where a piano is covered in with the other contents of the dwelling the adjuster can apply cash value or cash repairs, there being no specific sum for the claimant to keep her eye on. Where a specific sum is written on a piano, the amount should not exceed 70 per cent. of the cash value, not instalment cost, for the reason that in renewing, year after year, a reduction of the amount would not be kindly agreed to by the insured, and it is always better to start right.

TRADE NOTES.

The Hamilton Dry Goods Company have acquired another site adjoining their present premises in Montreal, and will remodel their buildings and render them 50 per cent. larger.

The Western Canada Cement and Coal Company, Limited, Ottawa, capital \$1,250,000, headed by A. F. MacLaren, of Ottawa, will manufacture and deal in cement and products thereof, artificial stone, etc.; also generate electricity for the company's purposes.

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