

the shareholders as at November 30, 1910, numbered about 470, and the premium received upon sales of capital stock during the years 1909 and 1910 was 5 p.c., the rate of commission paid to agents for the sale of such stock being also 5 p.c.

The work of the New Zealand **New Zealand's life insurance department over State Insurance.** a period of forty years, from 1870 to 1909, is effectively shown in a series of statistics bearing on the subject, published in the Department's journal, now to hand. From these statements, it appears that during the forty years the total premiums received aggregated £8,161,046; there was paid to policyholders or their representatives, £5,372,293; and the funds at December 31, 1909, were £4,405,141. Cash profits to the amount of £1,372,710 have been divided, securing to the policyholders reversionary bonuses amounting to £2,539,470. The interest received during the forty years, aggregating £3,370,782, has been sufficient, it is stated, to provide for all taxation, expenses of working and special reserves and to contribute, in addition, £1,615,488 towards the payment of claims. The present interest income is upwards of £200,000 per annum. Assets at December 31, 1909, were distributed as follows:—

Mortgages	£2,620,595	57.8 p.c.
Loans on policies	764,279	16.8 p.c.
Gov't. Securities	668,030	14.7 p.c.
Local bodies' debentures	179,303	4.0 p.c.
Miscellaneous, including cash	171,361	3.8 p.c.
Landed and house property	132,549	2.9 p.c.

The investments of the Department, it appears, are controlled by an independent board, composed of the Finance Minister, the Insurance Commissioner, the Surveyor-General, the Superintendent of State-Guaranteed advances, the Solicitor-General and the Public Trustee, and this board must be unanimous before any loan can be granted on real estate. The rate of interest earned during 1909 was £4 12s. 11d. p.c. At the end of 1909 there were 48,016 policies of all classes in force, assuring a total of £12,447,748, inclusive of bonus additions and £20,590 immediate and deferred annuities per annum, the annual premiums amounting to £336,873. From the statistics given, it seems that about 34 p.c. of the ordinary life insurance in force in New Zealand at the end of 1909, was with the Government Department.

French Capital Abroad.

In view of the efforts now being made to attract French capital to Canada in large volume, it is interesting to notice the very large amounts of foreign investments held by French investors. According to M. Alfred Neymarck, a well-known economic authority whose annual compilation on the subject has recently been published, France now possesses some 25 million francs (\$5,000,000) in foreign public funds and 15 billion francs (\$3,000,000,000) in foreign stocks and bonds. From these investments a minimum revenue of 2 billion francs (\$400,000,000) is received. Another French financial critic, M. Fernand Maroni, writing in the *Journal des Débats*, explains that lately a change has come over French capitalists and investors with regard to the class of investments they favour. At

one time they placed safety of capital before high interest return, but in these days the cost of living has compelled many people to look for investments giving a large return while others "speculate for the rise."

The Law Car and General Failure.

According to newspaper reports, now received on this side, of meetings of creditors and shareholders of the Law Car and General Insurance Corporation, of London of whose failure, particulars have already been given in our columns, the position is a serious one. The Company, which was formed in 1906, subsequently embarked in marine insurance at such low rates that it was impossible to carry it on profitably. In 1909, the Official Receiver stated, the auditors drew the attention of the board of directors to the position in which they stood, but the warnings were disregarded and a balance sheet was sent out which did not represent the true position of the Company's affairs. In February, 1910, despite the warning of the auditors a prospectus offering £60,000 shares at par with a 10s. premium was issued, a previous issue of £250,000 in March, 1909, having been taken up to the extent of £144,000 at a premium of 1s. 6d. per share. The assets, the Official Receiver now estimates, are likely to amount to £6,700—to be divided among 301,000 creditors. There would be, said this official, no dividend by the time the expenses of liquidation were paid without calling on the shareholders for the amounts still due on their shares.

New Issues in London.

Inadvertently last week, we credited the North Coast Land Company with an issue in London, of only 5,000 6 per cent. participating preference shares of \$5 each at 23s. per share. The figures should have been 50,000. This makes the total in our table of Canadian public issues in January in London (p. 215), £1,365,625.

Affairs in London.

(Exclusive Correspondence of The Chronicle).

The Public's Attitude towards New Issues, and a New Form of Competition—Popularising Consols—Selling Canadian Town Sites in England—Important Railway Amalgamation.

There have been several failures among the big new issues of capital recently offered to the public. Among these may be noted the Cuban Telephone Company's bonds, for which Messrs. Sperling & Company were responsible. In fact, the issues offered to the public have not been taken up so well as they used to be taken up, and out of about a dozen loans recently made, four are standing at a discount, and it is very doubtful if those quoted in the newspapers at a premium, could be sold in any quantity at the quoted prices. The new Irish Land three per cents, Newfoundland three and a half per cents, South Manchurian Railway four and a half per cent. bonds, and Straits Settlements 3½ per cent. stock, are each standing at a discount. There is a change coming over the investing public in respect to their attitude towards new issues. The prospectus advertised