

NEW PROVINCIAL TAX ON STOCKS, BONDS AND SECURITIES.

We have taken steps to obtain from our solicitor, the Hon. A. W. Atwater, K.C., former treasurer of the Province of Quebec, an opinion as to the constitutionality and legality of the Act passed by the Legislature of the Province of Quebec which imposes a tax upon the vendors of securities at the rate of two cents per \$100 par value.

We have reason to believe that this opinion will be that the Act is illegal as it imposes an indirect tax and is an interference with trade and commerce.

LONDON AND LANCASHIRE LIFE.

The annual statement of the London and Lancashire Life Assurance Company shows the new policies issued in 1904 to have been 2,376 for \$3,479,240. The net premium income last year was \$1,467,300, to which was added \$373,140 from interest, etc., making the total income \$1,840,440. The death claims, with bonus additions, were \$612,440, and claims under matured policies, \$159,615, the total payments for claims amounting to \$772,055.

The increase to the funds after all payments had been provided for was \$638,465, making the total funds of the company at the close of 1904, \$10,002,385, the total assets being given as \$10,099,302. According to the Abstract, published by the Superintendent of Insurance, the London and Lancashire's premiums in Canada in 1904 were \$333,573, the number of policies new and taken up 578, the amount of policies new and taken up \$811,780, and the net amount in force \$9,717,223.

Mr. B. Hal Brown, the manager for Canada, is one of the best known and most respected representatives of life insurance interests in the Dominion. He has just returned from a visit to London, England, where he attended the annual meeting of the Company, and was able to report that the Canadian business is enlarging. The London and Lancashire has a very strong Board in this country, on which are, Lord Strathcona, Messrs H. Stikeman, general manager of the Bank of British North America; C. M. Hays, vice-president and general manager of the Grand Trunk Railway, E. L. Pease, general manager of the Royal Bank and C. R. Hosmer, director of the Canadian Pacific Railway and of the Merchants' Bank.

LAKE OF THE WOODS MILLING COMPANY.

Owing to the absence of the president, Mr. Robert Meighen, who is at present in Great Britain, the payment of the dividend on the Common Stock of the above company has been deferred.

Mr. Meighen sails from Liverpool on June 2, On his arrival the matter will be dealt with, and it is generally understood that 6 per cent. will be paid on the 1st. July.

THE MONTREAL COTTON CO. AND THE DOMINION TEXTILE CO.

Rumours and denials of the Montreal Cotton Company joining the big cotton merger still continue, and while no official announcement is obtainable, it is very generally believed that the Dominion Textile Company interests have obtained control of a good round block of the Montreal Cotton Company stock. It is also understood that definite proposals for the control of the Montreal Cotton Company have been made, and securities based on the Montreal Cotton Company property are supposed to have been offered in exchange for the present Common stock of the company. The price mentioned is \$100 in 6 p.c. bonds and \$25 in 7 p.c. non-cumulative preferred stock for each \$100 worth of the present common stock of the Montreal Company, which is at present paying 7 p.c. On this basis the return would be 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ p.c. instead of 7 p.c., as at present, but it will be noted that the 7 p.c. preferred stock is non-cumulative and a dividend on it is in no way guaranteed. Granting that the 6 p.c. bonds will be worth 100 and the preferred stock 85, this would give a value of 121 $\frac{1}{4}$ to Montreal Cotton. It is rumoured that some of the larger interests of the Montreal Cotton Company are demanding \$50 of preferred stock instead of \$25, and the deal may possibly go through on this higher basis. As stated at the beginning of this paragraph, however, nothing official or in any way authorized is as yet obtainable.

ALLIANCE ASSURANCE COMPANY.

The report of the Alliance Assurance Company for 1904 shows the net fire premiums received last year to have been \$4,683,485, which is a substantial sum in excess of 1903. To this was added interest and dividends, less income tax, amounting to \$408,040, making the income for the year, in the fire department, \$5,091,525. The losses by fire, less re-insurances, were \$2,320,195, which gives a ratio of 49.53 per cent. on the net premium receipts, which is a very satisfactory figure for a year which was marked by such disastrous conflagrations as those at Baltimore, Toronto and other cities. The net result of the operations of the past year was an underwriting surplus of \$765,270, to which the interest receipts of \$408,040 being added made \$1,173,310, which sum was transferred to profit and loss account. The amount of the fire fund at the end of the year was \$10,630,820.