

THE UNION BANK REPORT

The Union Bank of Canada occupies a unique position among the larger banking institutions of the Dominion by reason of the location of its head office west of the Great Lakes. The step taken a few years ago of the removal of its headquarters from the Ancient City of Quebec, where the Bank had its original home, was the logical result of an enterprising policy, which has given the institution probably a wider network of interests in the Canadian prairie provinces than any other bank. The policy of paying attention to the needs of the prairie west, when it was still the day of small things in that part of the Dominion has been justified by results, and that the Union Bank is still cultivating this field, which it has made particularly its own, with diligence and energy, is seen in the fact that during the past year no fewer than 67 new branches have been opened in the three prairie provinces. Within the last year or two also, the Bank has launched out into the foreign field in collaboration with a prominent New York institution, and agencies of a subsidiary bank have been opened up in France, in China and Japan, and on the Pacific Coast of the United States. The development of Canadian trade with those centres will doubtless, in course of time, bring a large amount of business to the parent institution.

As a result of the Bank's increased activities, the paid-up capital has been increased during the year just closed by \$3,000,000 to \$8,000,000; the reserve fund being concurrently enlarged to \$5,600,000, which, if not so large, proportionately, as that of some of the other Canadian banks, is yet in a proportion of 70 per cent. to paid-up capital. Doubtless, in due course, this rest will be increased out of profits to a parity with the paid-up capital. The annual financial statement, which is published in full on another page, shows some interesting figures. The prosperous condition of the Western farmer is indicated by an increase of over \$15,000,000 in notice bearing deposits, a growth which suggests a very marked improvement in the liquid resources of that part of the Dominion, where the Union Bank most strongly entrenched. Concurrently, current loans, including grain loans, which doubtless form a very important proportion of the Bank's business, increased by \$12,500,000, in connection with which increase the rise in values of foodstuffs and other staple commodities needs to be borne in mind. Profits were satisfactory, being equal to 9.70 per cent. on the capital and reserve, and altogether the year 1919 appears to have been for the Bank a period of steady and continuous progress.

In connection with internal organization, one step adopted by this Bank is of interest, and ap-

pears worthy of emulation by other banking institutions, that of holding a series of conferences at various points where high officials of the Bank meet the rank and file of managers, and discuss their problems. Conferences of this kind should have a distinctly good effect in bettering a bank's service to the public. The country bank manager, separated by long distances from his head office, is only too apt to begin to feel isolated, and this method of bringing him into touch with his head office officials and his fellow-managers, should be of considerable value in stimulating his loyalty, which after all, is only in question in very rare instances, his capacity and his ambition.

RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD.

Insurance underwriters are doing a lot of figuring now-a-days in regard to the problems of the reconstruction period. It is realized that there will be a great depreciation in many localities, owing to the cessation of war activities and this fact will necessitate a good deal of readjustment in values and a close scrutiny of the moral hazard. It is to be hoped that time will remedy this condition to a considerable extent, that plants built and equipped for war manufacturing will be adjusted for peace purposes after a while and the values of surrounding property enhanced thereby, but the preliminary slump cannot be avoided, and buildings erected under the pressure of necessity, at war time prices, will hardly be likely to return to their original value.

On the other hand, a vast amount of construction, which has been held up because of the war, will now be hurried to a conclusion, and much new business will require the expert attention of the agents.

NATIONAL LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY.

The National Life Assurance Company of Canada takes pleasure in announcing the appointment of Mr. Robert G. Macpherson, formerly representative of Vancouver in the House of Commons and late Post Master, as Provincial Manager for the Province of British Columbia with headquarters at 211-13 Rogers Bldg., Vancouver. The National Life is a Company well and favorably known throughout the Dominion and under Mr. Macpherson's able and aggressive management, with the assistance of Mr. H. Nowell, former cashier at Vancouver, there is no doubt but that the Company will continue to show still greater progress and prosperity. The year 1919 was the most outstanding in twenty-one years.