

acre. Both the total and the average yield are lower than in 1909, but they are more favorable than was indicated early in the season, and Saskatchewan not only leads all the provinces of the Dominion in point of wheat production, but is second only in North America, to Minnesota, the latter's production last year being 94,000,000 bushels. The total acreage under oats, in Saskatchewan last year, was 2,082,607, and the production thereon 63,315,295 bushels, representing an average yield per acre of 30.40. Under barley, 238,394 acres produced 5,859,018 bushels, an average per acre of 24.58. To flax 396,230 acres were devoted, an increase over the previous year of 77,130, and producing 3,044,138 bushels. This works out at 7.68 bushels per acre.

Oil Rush in Alberta.

At Edmonton last week no fewer than 61 oil companies were granted certificates of incorporation by the Provincial Government within a single 24 hours, and in the aggregate, it is stated, more than one hundred companies are in process of establishment. The *raison d'être* of this rush is the petroleum rights in the vicinity of Morinville, where the rights on over 100 sections of land have been leased from the Dominion Government, each company being limited to one square mile.

Fire Rates at Winnipeg.

At a further sitting of the commission appointed by the Winnipeg City Council to investigate the fires which have recently taken place, evidence was given by Mr. F. J. L. Harrison, secretary of the Fire Underwriters' Association, with reference to the rates upon fire-proof buildings in comparison with those which are not fire-proof. Mr. Harrison stated that fire-proof buildings got a rate about 60 p.c. less than the others. He urged the necessity of the education of the public on this subject and expressed the opinion also that the building by-laws should enforce the erection of fire-proof buildings. Alderman Fowler stated that a by-law on this subject is being drafted at the present time.

Department of Railways in British Columbia.

Government bills are under consideration in the British Columbia legislature, providing for the creation of a department of railways and the appointment of a minister and deputy minister of railways. Dr. Young explained on their second reading, that the new department would have control of steam railroads and tram lines. Both of these were expanding so rapidly that it was necessary for the Government to take more active control over them. The work which was going on, more especially in connection with the Canadian Northern, which had obtained its charter from the province, rendered it imperative that there should be a department which could exercise more direct control over such a company, especially in view of its financial arrangements with the Government. For the present, it is the intention to continue the portfolio of railways with that of public works, both being in charge of Mr. Taylor.

Workmen's Compensation in Saskatchewan.

A Workmen's Compensation bill is under discussion by the Saskatchewan legislature. It is generally advocated that contractors should be made liable under the act in the case of erecting

buildings on farms, but the extension of the act to farming operations was not strongly supported.

New Fire Insurance Bill in British Columbia.

A bill has been introduced into the British Columbia legislature for the regulation of fire insurance within the province. It appears to follow on the recommendations presented last August by the Royal Commission on Fire Insurance.* Every company receiving a license to do fire insurance, business in the province is required to deposit \$20,000 with the Government and to pay an annual tax of 2 p.c. of the gross premiums. Wide powers are given to the Superintendent of Insurance both in the matter of cancelling a company's license, for cause, and in the investigation of suspicious fires. In his explanation of the bill, Mr. Bowser said there was some sentiment throughout the province in favour of having the rates charged by the Fire Underwriters' Association regulated by the Government, but this could not be done satisfactorily and was better left to competition.



Financial and General.

THE BANK OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA has declared a half-yearly dividend of 30 shillings per share and a bonus of 10 shillings per share, being at the rate of 8 p.c. per annum, making the usual 7 p.c. for the year. The dividend is payable on April 1.

THE ALBERTA & GREAT WATERWAYS RAILWAY CASE.—An Edmonton telegram states that an order has been made in the Saskatchewan Supreme Court, allowing the Dominion and Union Banks to pay their share of the proceeds of the issue of bonds of the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway into court pending a decision in the case begun by the province.

IRON AND STEEL BOUNTIES.—In the House of Commons on Wednesday, Mr. Fielding informed Mr. Sharpe, North Ontario, that the total amount paid in iron and steel bounties from 1896 to January 31, 1911, was \$16,315,862. In reply to a further question as to whether Parliament will have an opportunity of discussing the advisability of extending the bounties, before an extension is decided upon, Mr. Fielding stated that bounties can only be extended by proceedings which would require legislative action.

THE DOMINION TEXTILE COMPANY has issued a statement that its orders on hand, taken at remunerative prices, amount to over \$3,000,000. The Company's mills are working at their full capacity, and sales for the nine months ending December 21 last are reported as exceeding those of the preceding year by between \$300,000 and \$400,000. The Company, it is stated, has during the last five years spent upwards of \$2,500,000 in improvements and machinery, and now has in operation a total of over 9,000 looms and 360,000 spindles. Hands employed number 6,500, the annual wage roll being over \$2,000,000.

HALIFAX ELECTRIC TRAMWAY.—The report of the directors of the Halifax Electric Tramway

* See The Chronicle, September 9, 1910, p. 1311.