

THE official bank statement for November shows steady improvement in the financial condition of the country, and is altogether the most favorable one yet published for the current year. Discounts have increased ten and a half millions, whilst overdue debts have decreased about one and a quarter millions. Circulation has increased a million and a half. The liabilities are \$151,943,592 as compared with \$145,782,577 for November last year, and the assets are \$232,861,035 against \$220,937,857. A pleasing feature is shown in the fact that the deposits in the savings banks have increased over \$400,000, and the total deposits, including those in the savings departments, are about \$5,000,000 larger than the same time last year.

A MEETING of the general court of the Hudson's Bay Company was lately held in London, England, for the purpose of electing three members of the Board. The chairman reported that although full returns were not in, yet indications pointed to a good average collection of furs for the year. £20,000 worth of furs had to remain over at York Factory, owing to the wreck of the ship on Hudson's Bay last fall. It was stated that fur-bearing animals did not seem to be decreasing to any extent, in consequence of the settlement of the country. In regard to the land held by the company in the Northwest, it was stated that sales were not large. Considerable land had reverted to the company, upon which part payment had been made. Total receipts from sales of land since the commencement have amounted to £450,000, and about £200,000 is still due from this source. The value of land reverting to the company amounted to £500,000, or rather was sold for that figure. These lands were sold during the "boom," and generally about one payment was made upon them. The policy indicated in regard to the lands was, that sales would not be pressed by reducing prices. On this subject the chairman said: "Our land is there, and I do not think it would be wise, even if it were possible, to force sales of it. I think it would be a pity to sacrifice our property by putting too low a figure on it." It was announced that British Columbia furs were now shipped across the continent *via* the C.P.R., instead of around Cape Horn, or across the isthmus of Panama, as formerly.

THE Knights of Labor organization, whose surprisingly rapid growth and development has been the wonder of all and the discomfiture of many, has apparently already reached the zenith of its fame, and its power is now as rapidly on the wane. A few months ago its power was dreaded by capital, commerce, and in political circles. The odor of socialism connected with the organization, not as a part of the constitution of the Knights, but as a result of communion and contact with such classes in the large cities, caused many to look upon the order with suspicion. Though the Knights themselves repudiated any connection with socialism, yet there were those who considered the order dangerous to society and a menace to the whole social fabric. But to all appearance its influence is now rapidly on the wane, and disintegration has already set in. As is often

the case this change has not been brought about by outside influences, but from within. This vast labor organization has received its death blow not from capital, with which it was supposed to be in "eternal struggle," but from labor itself. The direct cause of misfortune to the Knights is the organization of a rival labor association, with somewhat antagonistic principles to the former. The new order which was formed at the recent convention of delegates from the different trades unions, held at Columbus, Ohio, will be known as the American Federation of Labor. In this order the autonomy of each trade is recognized, and all are combined in a sort of federal union, to deal with matters affecting labor in general. In addition to the individual unions, the formation of state and provincial organizations will be encouraged, for the purpose of combining to secure local legislation in the interest of workmen. Above these there will be the national and international unions whose objects shall be "to secure national legislation in the interests of the working people and influence public opinion by peaceful and legal methods." The new order starts out with a membership of 350,000, which it is expected will be rapidly augmented, until it includes all national and international trades unions.

THE provincial election contest in Ontario has been watched with the keenest interest from all parts of Canada. The probability of an early dissolution of the Dominion House gave the matter more than usual significance, as indicating what might be expected from the same province in the coming parliamentary elections. Added to this was the intense feeling worked up by the agitation led by the *Toronto Mail* against the Roman Catholics. The Government was charged with pandering to Roman Catholic influences, and granting undue liberties to this section of the people. Numerous complaints were raked up on this score, some of them possessing a shadow of reason, but the most of them savoring strongly of electioneering garbage. Clergymen joined in the fray with that bitterness usually displayed by the gentlemen of the broad cloth when they take a hand in politics, and altogether the contest was conducted with extreme animosity throughout. Many of the charges against the Government were urged with such energy and apparent plausibility, that it looked as though the crusade might prove successful in overthrowing it. In a province whose population is made up of such a very large majority of those professing the Protestant faith, it would not have been a matter for astonishment, had the susceptibility of the people been sufficiently worked upon by the persistent cry of undue Catholic influences in Government circles, as to turn a majority of the people against the latter. Coming so soon after the contest in the sister province of Quebec, where a somewhat similar election cry had resulted in turning a large majority for the Ross Government into a minority, there was every reason to fear that the same tactics might prove successful in Ontario, in returning to office the men who for party purposes engineered the movement. But happily such has not been the case. Either Meredith and the *Mail* were not the proper jockies to ride the Protestant horse

to victory, or the people of Ontario are above being influenced by an election cry tending to arouse religious bigotry. Whilst the principle of equal justice to all, without regard to race, creed or color, should ever be recognized as the only foundation for true liberty in a free country, yet any little favors granted the Roman Catholics of Ontario, not necessarily called for as a matter of strict justice, could be looked upon more as a matter of toleration to them than an injury to Protestantism. Surely the large Protestant majority in Ontario can well afford to be generous with their Roman Catholic fellow-citizens, and so long as no injustice is done the former, any little favors shown the latter might be allowed to pass over without stirring up such a hubbub as has lately been witnessed in that province. This is perhaps a unique view of the case, but it is one which if followed up all over Canada, would make it the most contented country in the world. Had an election not been pending, this supposed undue influence of the Roman Catholic Church with the Government would not have been heard of, and therefore it may be safely concluded that Protestants have not suffered any great hardships from it. Its discovery just in time to serve party ends savors strongly of the usual tactics of politicians to make use of any cry to gain office. The people of Ontario in refusing to be influenced by appeals to religious bigotry, and intolerance, have set an example which should serve as a valuable lesson to all Canada. If Quebec and the other provinces will follow this example, the advantage to the Dominion will far overbalance the evils arising from the agitation. Appealing to sectional prejudice to serve party ends has ever been the curse of Canada. The rebuke administered to such tactics by the electorate of Ontario, will so far as that province is concerned, prove a salutary lesson for the future. There is another lesson which may be drawn from the decisive victory of the Mowat Government, and a course which, had our Manitoba Premier followed, he would now be enjoying the almost unanimous support of the people of this province instead of being at the head of a very narrow majority. Mr. Mowat has always been the firm champion of provincial rights, not only for his own province, but for the whole Dominion. In this way he has earned the admiration of both friends and opponents all over Canada, and the gratitude of those immediately interested. When Sir John MacDonald undertook to dispossess Ontario of a large portion of territory claimed by her, to please his solid French following (which has since shown its gratitude by deserting him), Mr. Mowat stood firmly by her rights and triumphed, as he also did in several other matters in which the Dominion Government attempted to interfere in the affairs of that province. Again, when the Dominion made an effort to usurp the provinces in the control of the liquor regulations, the Mowat government stood firm and carried the matter to a successful issue in the courts. The stability of the Canadian confederation rests upon the autonomy of the provinces in local affairs, and in ever upholding that autonomy Mr. Mowat has shown himself the champion of provincial rights. It would have been ungrateful in the people of Ontario to have turned him out in the face of his brilliant career in successfully upholding the interests of his province against Dominion aggression on so many occasions. If Manitoba had a Mowat instead of a Norquay this province would not now be gasping with the grit of monopoly upon her throat.