

been successful. Since early in 1893 there has been a succession of most trying incidents; panics, alarms, agitations, political disturbances, have never ceased, which have kept business under depression. Amid these conditions it is highly to Mr. Clouston's credit that he has kept the vessel in his charge on an even keel, and brought about results which have given satisfaction to the shareholders, and confidence to the public. The net profits for the past year were \$1,230,561, which provided two five per cent. dividends and left \$30,561 to be carried to Profit & Loss, the balance of which stands at \$886,900; this with a keet of \$6,000,000, constitutes a Reserve Fund of \$6,886,900. The Bank holds \$11,887,602 of deposits not bearing interest, and, \$28,137,088 of those bearing interest. Out of these funds it has Current Loans of \$35,975,089. The Bank of Montreal has long been distinguished by the extent of its immediately available Assets, which, at date of the Annual Report, amounted to \$26,638,550. With such resources on hand it is difficult to conceive such conditions ever arising as would bring the Bank any embarrassment. In his able address at the meeting Mr. Clouston said that according to the law of alternating good and bad periods it was

#### TIME FOR BETTER DAYS

to arrive. Whether we are through depression he said "time only can tell," but,

"With the settlement of the European question, which seems probable, at least temporarily, and the adjournment of the legislative bodies here and in the United States, the business community may have a chance of taking breath and commencing another struggle to attain prosperity. In the United States there are signs of the sunshine breaking through the clouds, and a particularly bright gleam was Secretary Gage's statement the other day that the present administration was determined, once the tariff was out of the way, to take up the question of placing the currency of the country on a sound basis. In Canada the future is still shrouded in uncertainty. The past year has been very disappointing, a year of increasing business depression, full of unsettling incidents, and there have been a considerable number of failures. More will have to follow, unless some improvement takes place this year. The position, so far as I can read it, is this, and it seems to me a very delicate one: Any further depression, coming on a community already weakened by a long fight against adverse circumstances, will precipitate a very serious state of affairs, worse than anything we have yet had to encounter. On the other hand a settlement of the tariff with a due regard to established interests, a good crop with fair prices, lenient treatment and judicious assistance meantime to those in business, may yet make this year the beginning of a prosperous cycle."

The prospect of good crops; the mining development going on; the extension of the lumber trade with England; the increased dairying and dead meat business; the growth of the pulp industry; were alluded to by Mr. Clouston as hopeful signs. He, however, considered the situation as needing much care, and business interests requiring, "all the encouragement that can be given."

#### THE HONORABLE SENATOR DRUMMOND,

Vice-President, who presided at the annual meeting in the absence of Sir Donald A. Smith, said he regarded the results of the year's business as "eminently creditable to the General Manager and staff." He spoke of the stagnation due to the distrust and uncertainty which have exercised for several years, as still prevailing. Vice President Drummond deprecated frequent changes in the fiscal policy of the country as the most potent influence in delaying its progress. He regretted the absence of men of weight and experience in Parliament, who were too much disposed to throw the burthen of public duties upon those less qualified for their discharge, but who "awake to a feverish period of indignant and anxious remonstrance when they find their interests imperilled by legislation which might have been prevented at an earlier time." The Vice-President regretted the gambling going on in doubtful mining properties, the number of those proved to be valuable being, however, sufficient to place beyond doubt the enormous wealth of British Columbia. After a glance at the general condition of trade and its outlook, he closed his address by a reference to the life of the Queen, and the brilliant record of Her reign, as calling for heartfelt and loyal congratulations on the occasion of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee. Mr. Ogilvie in speaking to the motion of a vote of thanks to the General Manager and staff, said, "the Bank of Montreal has good reason to be proud of its officers." This judgment is concurred in by all those having business relations with the Bank. Mr. Clouston has our congratulations on the results of last year's business, which could not have been secured without the vigilant exercise of those qualities which distinguish the successful banker.

#### THE ALLOCATION OF LOSSES QUESTION.

We are much obliged to an esteemed and able correspondent for a criticism of our remarks in last issue on the allocation of losses. We are pleased to insert this letter which appears in our Correspondence column, as it not only affords us an opportunity of correcting figures incorrectly stated in our last but also of touching upon the allocation of losses as between Insurance Companies. We were more concerned in our last to bring the "mean" principle to the attention of our readers rather than attach any importance to the actual figures. The figures were inaccurate, as our correspondent remarks, although they served the purposes of illustrating the principle. However, if anything is worth doing it is worth doing well, and we now repeat the illustration and give the corrected figures:—

Co. "A" Insures \$200. On Household Furniture, and  
\$300. On Wearing Apparel.

Co. "B" Insures \$350. On Household Furniture, and Wearing Apparel.  
Loss.....\$300. On Household Furniture, and  
".....\$150. On Wearing Apparel.