	1902.	1901.	1900.	1899.
	$	$	$	$
In Feb....	i 1,984,290	d 327,524	i 82,680	i 1,458,604
In year....	i31,899,513	i32,399,692	i12,854,630	i21,032,913

The gross amount of Canadian deposits held last month was $333,860,783, which is larger by $286,005,000 than the total deposits held by the banks in Canada in February, 1872.

February generally sees an expansion of discounts owing to the same cause as reduces the demand deposits. The increases last month and in February in four previous years, were as follows:

	1902.	1901.	1900.	1899.
	$	$	$	$
In Feb....	i 4,337,698	i 1,128,648	i 3,652,761	i 4,816,077
In year...	i16,832,785	i 3,368,262	i37,850,235	i22,348,747

Sanguine hopes are entertained that the shipping business will open earlier this year and be far more prosperous than in 1901; the railways anticipate heavier receipts, and other enterprises have a promising outlook.

THE STRENGTH OF FRATERNALISM VIEWED AS ITS WEAKNESS.

It sounds paradoxical but it is true, that one of the main sources of the strength, of the popularity of the fraternal system of life assurance is also one of the main sources of its weakness. Members are attracted to a fraternal society by the pleasant time they are promised at the lodge meetings, by the lofty titles they may have conferred upon them, by the regalia they will be entitled to wear, and by the sense of comradeship which is inspired by continuous association with other members. These attractions may be ridiculed, but, while human nature and social conditions remain as they are and have been since recorded time, men will be drawn together by opportunities of associating under such circumstances as attend membership in a fraternal society. Americans claim to be the most democratic of people, yet nowhere in the world are there so many fraternal Orders which confer high sounding titles on members and bedeck them with rich regalia.

How to spend the leisure hours between work time and bed is a difficulty which leads to an infinity of mischief. A young man finds periodic lodge meetings helpful in filling up those gaps in his spare time, which are apt to be wearisome and full of temptation. Attendance at the gatherings of the fraternal society of which he is a member, enables him to pass several pleasant hours, weekly or fortnightly. If he is an officer his engagements as such occupy other parts of his leisure, and the ritual practiced in lodge and the conduct of its business, as a rule, tend to raise his self-respect. At lodge meetings self-control is learnt by the necessity of its observance; some insight is given into the methods of conducting public business; some knowledge is acquired of financial affairs of a wider range than managing the expenditure of his wages; and the sense of responsibility he is made to feel for the management of the society, quickens his mind and developes the higher faculties of his nature. He must be very deficient in mental capacity and moral sense who is not in both respects elevated by paying constant attention to the affairs of a fraternal society. Such influences are their strength, and, so far, their strength is contributory to the well-being of the whole community.

But the atmosphere which develops social attractions is not favourable to the growth of the sterner virtues required in the management of financial affairs. The leading officials of fraternal societies are too frequently elected because of their popularity which has arisen more from their genial manners and plausibility than their business qualifications. The man who can amuse and entertain a lodge by good stories, humourous speeches, some show of talent as a speaker, but who is wholly devoid of economic knowledge, has the "pull" of one who is thoroughly versed in the actuarial principles upon which life assurance is founded, if he is not attractive personally by social gifts. Popularity in a lodge is also secured by a member who brings in new members, and the competition is so keen between the various Orders to obtain a large membership that too little heed is paid to the danger arising from indiscriminate admissions. So long as the average death claims are kept low by a constant influx of "new blood," the members are satisfied that perpetual prosperity is assured. It is a very rare thing for a fraternal society to have an official who has even an elementary knowledge of actuarial principles. The idea of its being necessary for funds to be accumulated in order to meet future claims seems not to be fully realized by the members of fraternal societies. They are frequently called upon to "pass the hat" to meet some emergency, to meet some grant of a benevolent nature beyond what the rules sanction, so they regard this system as available should death-claims become unusually heavy. When the amiability of the lodge is disturbed by an awkward question put by Brother So and So, he is admonished for interrupting the harmony of the society, and some plausible, but utterly fallacious reply, is given to his query. He is told that the society cannot grow unless harmony prevails, a sentiment which almost invariably meets with the warm approval of a lodge. Harmony, good fellowship, fraternal feeling, pleasant associations, the ambition to occupy offices of distinction, all combine to divert the attention of the members of friendly societies from their financial basis and prospects. Their strength socially