

Pink Pills, but loses no opportunity to sound abroad their praise, with the result that others in his locality have benefitted by his experience and advice.

To those who are weak, easily tired, nervous, or whose blood is out of condition, Dr. Williams' Pink Pills come as a veritable boon, curing when all other medicines fail, and restoring those who give them a fail trial, to a full measure of health and strength. They will be found an absolute cure for St. Vitus dance, locomotor ataxia, rheumatism, paralysis, sciatica, the after effects of la grippe, chronic erysipelas, scrofula, etc. They are also a specific for the troubles peculiar to the female system, correcting irregularities, suppressions and all forms of female weakness. In the case of men they effect a radical cure in all cases arising from mental worry, overwork, or excesses of any nature. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are sold only in boxes bearing the firm's trade mark and wrapper (printed in red ink), and may be had of all druggists or direct by mail from Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, Brockville, Ont., or Schenectady, N.Y., at 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50.

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Merchants' Bank Meeting.

DIRECTORS REPORT A FAIRLY SATISFACTORY YEAR'S BUSINESS.

Mr. Hague's Address—He Speaks of the Position and Prospects of Commerce, the Condition of the Country, and the causes of Trade Troubles.

The annual general meeting of the shareholders of the Merchants' Bank of Canada was held in the Board Room of that institution yesterday at noon, when there were present Mr. Andrew Allan, Sir Joseph Hickson, Messrs. Jonathan Hodgson, Hector MacKenzie, T. H. Dunn (Quebec), J. P. Dawes, John Cassils, John Crawford, John Morrison, J. H. R. Molson, T. D. Hood, Captain W. H. Benyon, James Williamson, M. S. Folley, James O'Brien, F. S. Lyman, William Francis, M. Burke, James Gardner, Captain Ritchie, John McConnell, and J. S. Murray.

The proceedings were opened by Mr. Andrew Allan, president, taking the chair and requesting Mr. John Gault to act as secretary.

THE ANNUAL REPORT.

The president then submitted the following report of the Directors:—

The Directors, in meeting the Stockholders of the Bank on this occasion, beg to present the following report:—

The results of the business of the year have not been so large as those of last year.

But the Stockholders will, no doubt, understand that the year which has just closed was one of exceptional dullness in trade, and of a low range of profits generally, not only in banking, but in nearly every line of business carried on in the country.

The net profits of the year, after payment of charges, rebate on discounts, interest on deposits, and making provision for bad and doubtful debts, have amounted to..... \$551,849 51
The balance brought from last year, ending 31st May, 1894, was..... 5,428 28

Making a total of..... \$557,277 79
This has been disposed of as follows:
Dividend No. 52, at the rate of 8 per cent. per annum..... \$240,000 00
Dividend No. 53, at same rate..... 240,000 00
Added to contingent account..... \$480,000 00
Leaving a balance at the credit of surplus profits account of..... 57,277 79
\$557,277 79

The Stockholders will note that the profits made this year amounted to nearly nine and a quarter per cent. on the capital.

Although the business of the country generally was dull, the business of the Bank has been well maintained in every department excepting circulation. This important item has shown a smaller average of figures than for many years back, largely owing to the low prices prevalent for nearly all agricultural products.

The Bank this year has suffered no large loss. But a considerable number of small failures have taken place in the circle of its customers. From a number of these failures no loss resulted to the Bank; but it is impossible to bring out this result in every case.

The total amount of loss, however, for the year, was smaller than the average. But in view of possible depreciation in certain assets, it has been thought desirable, instead of carrying the whole of the profits forward, to add \$20,000 to Contingent Fund. Amongst the losses of the year was one of a very exceptional character, viz., that incurred by the failure of the Commercial Bank of Newfoundland. The amount, however, was only small.

The Board have decided to open a new branch at Hespeler, Ontario, the Bank having a considerable connection there, which it is important to conserve.

All the branches of the Bank have been inspected during the year, and its various officers have discharged their duties efficiently and with fidelity, and to the satisfaction of the Board.

The whole respectfully submitted.

(Signed) ANDREW ALLAN,
President.

Montreal, June 11th, 1895.

LIABILITIES AND ASSETS.

The statement of Liabilities and Assets at 31st May, 1895, is as follows:—

LIABILITIES.		1895	1894
1.—To the public.			
Notes in circulation.....	\$2,352,684 00	\$2,259,012 00	
Deposits not bearing interest.....	\$2,135,188 40	\$2,986,260 32	
Deposits bearing interest.....	8,157,448 09	7,302,937 42	
Interest due thereon to date.....	71,668 29	68,728 88	
	\$10,364,804 78		
Balance due to Canadian Banks keeping Deposit Accounts with this Bank.....	654,827 40	556,273 04	
Balances due to Canadian Banks in Daily Exchanges.....	816 87		
Balances due to Agents in Great Britain.....	182,107 47	666,769 44	
Dividend No. 53.....	240,000 00	240,000 00	
Dividends unclaimed.....	2,015 00	1,683 30	
	\$13,796,755 52	\$13,543,664 60	
2.—To the Stockholders.			
Capital paid up.....	\$6,000,000 00	\$6,000,000 00	
Reserve.....	3,000,000 00	3,000,000 00	
Surplus profits.....	57,277 79	5,428 28	
Contingent Accounts.....	74,215 00	56,480 00	
	\$22,928,248 31	\$22,605,572 88	
ASSETS.		1895	1894
Gold and Silver Coin on hand.....	\$389,759 28	\$368,406 32	
Dominion Notes on hand.....	897,093 00	1,000,942 00	
Notes and Cheques of other Canadian Banks.....	649,901 20	575,217 37	
Balances due by other Canadian Banks in account and daily exchanges.....	98,336 92	72,674 71	
Balances due by Banks and Agents in the United States.....	346,308 06	236,247 02	
Dominion Government Bonds.....	1,089,820 15	1,078,132 45	
Provincial Government Bonds.....		59,312 49	
Railway and Municipal Debentures.....	321,510 85	264,199 23	
Call and Short Loans on Bonds and Stocks.....	1,125,446 85	912,918 85	
Total available assets.....	4,918,176 31	4,553,050 44	
Time Loans on Bonds and Stocks.....	194,528 63	231,286 00	
Other loans & discounts.....	\$16,732,142 00		
Less reserved for.....	88,803 19	16,643,438 81	16,684,599 62
Loans and Discounts overdue (loss provided for).....	142,875 04	100,952 82	
Deposits with Dominion Government for security of Note circulation.....	159,312 70	159,312 70	
Mortgages, Bonds and other Securities, the property of the Bank.....	263,675 02	270,229 37	
Real Estate.....	55,162 21	44,932 92	
Bank premises and Furniture.....	536,868 20	537,283 20	
Other Assets.....	14,211 39	18,964 81	
	\$22,928,248 31	\$22,605,572 88	

The President then moved, seconded by Mr. Hector Mackenzie:

"That the report of the Directors as submitted be and the same is hereby adopted and ordered to be printed for distribution among the Stockholders."

The President called upon the General Manager, Mr. George Hague, for a few remarks on the financial outlook.

THE GENERAL MANAGER'S ADDRESS.

To judge by what we hear, Mr. President, the report just presented will be regarded as fairly satisfactory, considering the times. But I must confess to disappointment that we have realized so little out of so large a business as we have done. For though we have made over nine per cent. on the capital, we have only realized a little over six per cent. on our total surplus of Capital and Rest.

We have earned only little more than bare legal interest, yet in this we have done about as well as our neighbours, for all show about the same rate of profit on capital and surplus funds. But to say that they have made bare legal interest shows that the banks have made a mere nothing out of their banking business proper. For myself, I feel sometimes vexed that the enormous amount of transactions, amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars a year, in which we ourselves serve the public, and pass money over our counters, yields us such a miserable modicum of profit.

I shall not waste time in lamenting what may be inevitable (if it is inevitable), but it is only fair to banking interests in general to point it out. Competition between banks has been carried to such lengths of late years that an enormous amount of business, which actually costs the banks money, is done by them for nothing.

It has been said that Banking in Canada has now come to be somewhat of a monopoly. If that can be called a monopoly, in which thirty-eight institutions are competing against one another, to earn six per cent. for their Stockholders, the word monopoly must have changed its meaning of late. Banking in England and Scotland, and Ireland too, is a remunerative business. It is certainly not in Canada, as I was once told by an eminent London banker, in looking over the low range of our profits.

We have been fortunate this year, as the Report informs you, in escaping any large loss, and the total we have had to provide for has not been large. But it is impossible to go through such a year as the last, without being affected by some of the numerous failures that have taken place.

During last year 65 of the customers of the Bank failed or got into difficulties. In 42 of these cases our securities bring us out without loss. By the balance we shall lose a certain amount of money, which, as the report tells you, is less than the average.

I don't think this an unsatisfactory record considering that the total amount of loans and discounts passed through our books during the year, footed up to over ninety millions.

It is always of interest to us to note the causes of mercantile embarrassment, and it may be well for me to point out the causes of last year's failures, so as to plant a few buoys, or beacons, for the guidance of those who are navigating the sea of trade at present:

Branching out into lines of business other than a man's own, was one cause.

Attempting a wholesale business on a retailer's capital was another.

Attempting to make money out of buying property and building instead of sticking to a man's own trade was another.

Pushing and driving, in a reckless style, of a business which a man did not understand was another.

Engaging in the export trade across the Atlantic without practical knowledge and experience was another.

(A very favorite notion of people up in the interior, is that there is a mine of wealth in the export trade. People in Montreal know better.)

Neglecting business in order to attend to politics was another.

Reckless and thoughtless giving of credit was another.

And last, but no means least, was too great facility of borrowing money, and borrowing from more than one bank.

Last year's experience only confirms that of thirty years back, that mercantile failures in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred are avoidable by prudence, common sense, industry and intelligence.

The old maxims of trade are just as true to-day as ever they were. The talk we sometimes hear about old conditions having passed away and new ones coming to the front is trash. One might as well talk about these modern times having upset the law of gravitation.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

During the past year we have had no bank crisis in Canada, nor have we had any failure of a joint stock bank. But our sister colony of Newfoundland has been convulsed, and its