Gold Reserve by a million. The effect of these various changes is to raise the proportion of cash holdings to total liabilities to the public from 17.9 per cent. to 18.4 per cent. Bank balances abroad and call loans abroad both show substantial advances, the former from $3,144,502 to $5,235,607 and the latter from $6,080,847 to $9,815,950. Call loans in Canada are over $500,000 higher at $9,136,510. Security holdings show an increase of $1,700,000 to $18,629,042, this increase consisting almost entirely of participations in British Government and Canadian Government war loans. Total quick assets are $13,600,000 higher than in 1914 at $84,894,462 and in a proportion of 49.0 per cent. to liabilities to the public (these latter increased by nearly $19 millions to $173,148,928), compared with a proportion of 46.2 per cent. last year.

Canadian current loans and discounts have contracted from $84,585,973 to $82,004,872, but this decline is much more than offset by the rise in current loans abroad from $15,002,488 to $24,547,763 owing to activity in the Bank's West Indian business.

MR. H. STIKEMAN.

By the death of Mr. H. Stikeman, general manager from 1894 to 1912 of the Bank of British North America, which event took place at his residence, 216 Drummond Street, on Wednesday, there passes away a banker highly esteemed and well known throughout Canada.

Mr. Stikeman, who was born in England in 1852 and entered the service of the Bank of British North America in London, first came to Canada in 1871, and won rapid promotion in the Bank's service. After acting as the first agent of the Bank in New York City, he was appointed general manager, the period of his tenure of office, from which ill-health compelled him to retire, being marked by a very great expansion in the Bank's operations

Mr. Stikeman was known as a keen sportsman, and an active philanthropist, while his business associations included membership of the Canadian board of the London & Lancashire Life & General Assurance Association.

NORTHERN CROWN BANK REDUCES ITS CAPITAL.

Any merger proposal that was on the *tapis* in regard to the Northern Crown Bank has been dropped, and in order to place the Bank in a good position, the capital is to be reduced by 50 per cent.—an amount of about $1,430,000. This action was approved by the shareholders at the adjourned annual meeting held on Tuesday of this week at Winnipeg. Sir Daniel McMillan, the president of the Bank, dismissed the matter of the amalgamation in a sentence.

There is also behind the Allied position the economic resources of the Empire. The power of Canada and Australia to absorb recent large loans locally created have given the impression of solidarity. The evidence of mutual support between the home country and the colonies is likely to produce important results on the Empire's financial policy after war is over.—London Cable.

* * *

Canada Cement directors yesterday declared the first dividend on the common stock—3 per cent.

AUSTRALIAN BANKING EXPERIENCE.

In some respects recent action by the Australian banks has been similar to that of the Canadian banks. The necessity for the maintenance of particularly strong cash reserves has been realised and the banks generally show a highly liquid position. A typical half-yearly report, recently to hand, is that of the Queensland National Bank. This bank, which has a paid-up capital of £480,000 and reserve of £190,000, reports that in spite of the war and partial drought, the profits of the half-year are slightly higher at £51,746. Deposits show a large increase over last year, the figures being £7,591,693 against £6,499,745 the advance being about equally shared by the deposits of the Government of Queensland and by private deposits. Coin and bullion at £2,087,935 are slightly less than a year ago, but holdings of Australian notes at £1,427,448 have been nearly trebled. Advances (the equivalent of our Canadian current loans and discounts) are down from £6,349,997 to £6,288,587. Liquid assets are over 63 per cent. of liabilities excluding capital account and an item of "interminable and inscribed deposit stock," the purpose of which, apparently, is special protection of depositors. An interesting divergence from Canadian banking practice is seen in the announcement by the Chairman at the recent shareholders' meeting that the pastoral properties of the Bank had been transferred to a subsidiary company. The Canadian equivalent of this would be an announcement by a Bank that it had transferred to a subsidiary, ownership of say, fifty or a hundred sections of wheat lands in Saskatchewan!

NEW BRITISH CAPITAL ISSUES IN 1915.

The London Economist's record of new capital issues in London during 1915 shows the unprecedented total, owing to war financing, of £685,241,700. The 1914 total was £512,522,600, the highest total in any previous year having been £267,439,100 in 1910. This reckoning represents as far as possible genuinely new creations. It does not include new issues or those portions of them that are raised for the purpose of redeeming outstanding liabilities. Neither, of course, does it include the enormous advances made by the British Government to the Governments of the Allies.

A table of the destination of the new capital shows a total of £621,140,000 for the United Kingdom; $22,289,400 for the overseas Empire—Canada's share being £5,475,000, against £45,439,400 in 1914 and £44,119,000 in 1913. Of the balance of £41,912,300, which went to foreign countries, £24 millions went to France and £9,522,000 to Russia.

CANADA'S WAR EXPENDITURE.

The war expenditure of Canada last month was 46 per cent. in excess of that for November. The December war expenditure amounted to $19,233,943 compared with an expenditure of $13,155,797 in November. The total of the Dominion's war expenditure during the fiscal year to date (9 months) is $85,748,898, which, added to the war expenditure in the preceding fiscal year of $60,750,476 makes a total war expenditure by the Dominion to December 31, 1915, of $146,499,374.