

total 1,059. Sub-branches to the number of ten are included in these figures.

The subjoining table will show the increase by Provinces at four periods within seven years. The leap between 1902 and 1904 is remarkable. There are three new banks opened in this seven years and one bank suspended.

| | 1st July. 1904. | 1st Jan. 1903. | 1902. | 1898. |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Province of Ontario | 498 | 420 | 349 | 306 |
| “ Quebec | 174 | 147 | 137 | 117 |
| “ New Brunswick | 48 | 41 | 35 | 30 |
| “ Nova Scotia | 105 | 102 | 89 | 69 |
| “ Prince Edward Island | 11 | 11 | 6 | 6 |
| “ British Columbia | 51 | 47 | 46 | 47 |
| “ Manitoba | 89 | 79 | 52 | 46 |
| North West Territories | 80 | 54 | 30 | 18 |
| Yukon District | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Total | 1,059 | 904 | 747 | 641 |

add Molsons Bank 47
1106

It is in the prairie country that the growth of bank branches and agencies has been relatively greatest. In Manitoba there were in 1898 only forty-six branches, where, in 1904, the number is eighty-nine. In the Territories, there were only eighteen branches in 1898, while in 1904 there are eighty. This exhibits an increase from sixty-four to one hundred and sixty-nine in the Western country, nearly trebling the number.

Taking individual banks the Canadian Bank of Commerce has the largest number of branches, one hundred and one in all; next, the Merchants Bank of Canada, ninety-one—increased from seventy in two years—then the Union Bank of Canada, with eighty-three; the Bank of Hamilton with sixty-three—increased from forty-one since 1902—the Bank of Montreal has fifty-eight, and the Bank of Nova Scotia fifty-one; followed by the Royal and Imperial. The table will repay some study.

It is noticeable that some of the banks whose quarters are in Ontario, have branches only in that province. The Standard Bank, for instance, has twenty-six branches, all in Ontario; the Traders Bank, forty-eight, all in Ontario; the Western and Metropolitan Banks, also have all their branches in that one province. The Union Bank of Halifax, the Bank of New Brunswick, the Bank of Yarmouth, the Peoples Bank of New Brunswick, and the St. Stephen's Bank have all their offices in the Maritime Provinces, but the Peoples Bank of Halifax, out of its twenty-five offices, has nine in the Province of Quebec. Of the French banks, only the Hochelaga and the Nationale have offices outside of the Province of Quebec. The Hochelaga has branches as far West as British Columbia. There is a branch of the Merchants Bank of Prince Edward Island outside of its own Province. Of the new banks, the Crown has all its agencies in Ontario, but the Sovereign has six of its forty branches in Quebec.

As to the number of banks represented in the various Provinces, it will be found that there are twenty-three banks represented in the Province of

Quebec, while only twenty-two are represented in Ontario. Ten banks each have offices in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick; four in Prince Edward Island; ten in the North-West Territories; eleven in the Province of Manitoba; nine in British Columbia; two in the Yukon.

THE COST OF LIVING.

A man in Brantford asks us if it is true that the expense of living has advanced in the last few years by twenty-five per cent. over and above the advance in wages or any kind of middle-class income. We reply that this is a difficult question to answer, because authorities have different opinions upon it. We have seen the increased cost of living as between 1899 and 1904 estimated as high as thirty-three per cent.; another, a newspaper statement or estimate, gives it at twenty per cent. between 1900 and 1903. More trustworthy computations, or at least computations which are probably upon a large scale, have been made by bodies in the United States. For example, the Employers' Association of Chicago has made a calculation that the cost of living increased by 16.8 per cent. between 1898 and 1903, which if accurate would show no hardship to the wage-earning class, for it corresponds very closely with the estimated general advance of wages these five or six years.

Such a subject is best investigated broadly, however, and therefore we are glad to be able to give some statistics as to the cost of living compiled by the United States Department of Labor. This department procured its figures from 2,567 families with an average income of \$827.19, and an average expenditure of \$768.54, and found the cost of living in 1902, when it was highest, to be 16.1 per cent. more than in 1896, when it was lowest. In the same period, average wages have increased by just that 16.1 per cent.; in some cases by more. We are glad to infer that the instances from which the average is calculated in this instance are taken from the artisan class. It is to be remembered, however, that while whether by strikes, threats of strikes, or voluntary concessions by employers, the trades-people or hand-working class have had their wages raised by over sixteen per cent. the class of clerks, book-keepers, civil service hands—the great army of salaried men and women who work in counting houses, have scarcely had their pay raised at all. Certainly, their average increase of income would be nearer five or ten per cent. than sixteen, and it has not kept pace with the rise in cost of living.

Our correspondent ventures the opinion that in Canada the mechanic class save one-eighth of their wages each year. He is of the opinion that some such percentage as 12½ is yearly put aside by the workers in such communities as Brantford and Peterboro, and invested in real estate, life assurance, or placed at interest in saving banks. Answering him on this point, we are doubtful if any such average as he mentions can be predicated of the hand-workers in Canada generally. Among Ontario towns and cities, Brantford is perhaps an exceptionally thrifty place; Galt certainly is, and Berlin. And some of the Nova Scotia towns are notably saving. But we cannot believe that in the cities of Quebec and Montreal, the average artisan