

plicated, too dependent upon a variety of conditions not of the same nature, and too much affected by transactions and engagements entered into months ago, to reflect the temporary conditions of the day. April usually sees a decline in circulation. This year the note issues went down from \$52,442,982 to \$50,691,588, a decrease of \$1,751,394 as compared with \$605,266 in April, 1901. The increase in the year was \$3,684,887, against \$3,098,269 in same twelve months, 1900-1901, so that, what may be termed the winter season this year finds the note issues \$6,783,156 greater than they were two years ago, and \$19,876,665 more than in April, 1897, which, generally, may be regarded as the point around which trade turned towards better times. The decline of the note issues from the maximum in October last, which was \$57,954,779, to what will probably be the minimum of this season \$50,691,588, a decrease of \$7,263,191, is less, proportionately, than what has taken place in other years, the circulation seeming to be tending, as it enlarges, to greater steadiness. The deposits payable on demand rose in April from \$92,907,158 to \$99,210,543, an increase of \$6,830,425, which is unusually large. In April, 1901, the enlargement was only \$2,261,482. These funds increasing so much after being drawn upon, as they were heavily in March last, indicates an easy financial condition existing amongst traders. The deposits payable after notice were augmented by only \$345,398, which is a remarkable contrast to April, 1901, when they increased to extent of \$5,318,906. Doubtless, new joint stock enterprises are absorbing some of the money that would otherwise go into banks as time-deposits.

The current loans in Canada advanced from \$300,066,698 to \$302,160,867, and those outside Canada from \$27,776,895 to \$28,737,195, these make a total increase in discounts of \$3,054,569, which is \$859,167 less increase than in April, 1901. These changes are too small to have any significance. The call and short loans in Canada went up last month from \$38,532,304 to \$39,503,535, and those outside Canada down from \$44,236,316 to \$43,020,869, the net result being a decrease of \$294,616. In the year, however, these short loans rose, those in Canada by \$6,886,506 and those outside \$6,860,316, aggregating an increase of \$13,746,822, which is an unusual advance in one year. The total loans, including discounts and call loans in and outside Canada at close of April amounted to \$413,422,466, against \$410,662,213 in March last, and \$372,312,475 in April, 1901, the total increase in the loans in the year ended 30th April last being \$41,109,991, which must have left a considerable amount of profits in excess of previous year. The

increase in deposits came within one million of the increase of loans, and both are over 70 per cent. larger than they were in the spring of 1898. As the capital on which dividends are expected to be paid only increased last year by \$1,655,513, the increase of active business was under such conditions as yield good returns.

FORECLOSED MORTGAGES AND PROPERTIES.

The question has been raised by the Evening Post as to the treatment of foreclosed properties by insurance companies. There is no special course for insurance companies to pursue in regard to foreclosed properties different to the policy advisable for any ordinary investor, nor, either, in regard to investments generally. It may be said of foreclosures, as the good Book says of "offences," they will come, for human judgments are not infallible. To lay down a hard and fast rule against buying foreclosed properties would be absurd, for in tens of thousands of cases such properties are good value for the amount for which they can be bought. A property capable of being made to yield an excellent return on the purchase money occasionally is foreclosed under circumstances which do not indicate any decline in its value as a revenue yielder. The owner may be a careless or unskillful manager, or sickness prevents his giving proper attention to his property, or he becomes involved in debt which prevents his paying the interest on a mortgage, or he lacks the means necessary to keep his property in a rentable condition, or improve it as local conditions demand. Our mortgage loan companies are familiar with such incidents. The leading ones in Ontario had a large quantity of foreclosed properties on their hands a few years ago, the absolute ownership of which they were compelled to assume during the depression that lasted from 1893 to 1897. These properties they have been gradually selling in the last two years at prices which entailed little or no loss. Doubtless, some of our insurance companies have had parallel experiences. Whether a foreclosed property should be promptly sold even at a loss or kept until a better opportunity for its sale arises, is entirely a question of circumstances which call for sound judgment. To force foreclosed properties to sale, at any price, displays no skill, it is sheer recklessness. The condition of each property, of real estate in its locality, of the prospects of the demand improving or otherwise, of the chances of making it a revenue yielder by improvements, these should be fully considered and the judgment thereon of experts obtained before a property is either sold or decided to be retained. Even with the advantage of long experience and a staff of expert valuers