

THE MERCHANTS BANK OF CANADA—Continued.

war, was \$335,996,850, and on March 31st, 1917, the close of the fiscal year, it was approximately \$900,000,000, the great increase being, of course, mainly due to the war. Our total trade for the fiscal year, 1917, was over \$2,000,000,000.

"And here I should like to say that a great question of the hour is to retain a proper liquid position of the Bank. It is well understood that all raw materials are to be had only at greatly enhanced prices, and that wages are on a very much higher scale, and that of necessity banking credits have had to be very greatly expanded to meet the situation, and, under the circumstances, unreasonable buying and storing of raw materials far ahead, and excessive contracting in advance on borrowed money, are not the best way of helping out a situation that bids fair to become strained, unless a policy of moderation be generally adopted, and a spirit of sweet reasonableness prevail. The necessity for very unusual effort in the turning out of war orders is not overlooked, but even banks must be allowed a breathing spell, and an influence consciously or unconsciously exerted in the direction of impairing the liquid position of the Chartered Banks of Canada should surely be strongly discouraged. The Chartered Banks are the bulwark and stay of Canada's industrial life. Anything done that would cripple or materially lessen their usefulness in that field, including work for the war, would work Canada a serious disservice. That the banks will keep themselves properly liquid is a cardinal and primary duty they owe to themselves and to the country. It may be that we are departing not a little from our legitimate business when we Canadian bankers make advances in the millions on obligations that have more than a year to run. However, you have no doubt heard of the proverb, that needs must when the devil drives.

"I am now going to strike a personal note and venture a word about myself.

"For the last twenty of the forty-six years I have served the Merchants Bank I have been a fairly busy man, and, when a year ago the Board proposed a re-organization of the Chief Executive's duties, I welcomed it as affording better service to the bank and myself a much needed relief, for latterly I was conscious of being under a considerable strain. Well, the Board very considerably gave me the appointment of Managing Director, and the Montreal Manager was made General Manager. The advantage to the Bank was immediate, and to myself in the health way, important. The new General Manager has had a large and extensive and successful experience and, in his new capacity, can serve the institution as no other.

"Finally, let us hope that the coming year will see the close of the Great War and that Armageddon will cease pouring out rivers of blood on the flower-strewn fields of France and Flanders. It almost seemed at one time as if God had turned His back on the nations and Hell's drama was being staged with the Kaiser as prompter. We are in the way of better things now, we believe, and we all trust that before another Annual Meeting comes around, peace will have been signed in Berlin, and liberty will once more be enthroned throughout the whole world. A victor-crowned host will then return home to Canada, and among them over five hundred of the wearers of the bays will be men from the Merchants Bank of Canada. Those men in our service who have not gone forward we consider have well served their King and Country by making possible what would otherwise have been impossible, the reasonable working of this wide-reaching institution. All thanks and honor likewise to them." (Applause).

THE GENERAL MANAGER'S ADDRESS.

Mr. Macarow—"In the first place, I, too, would like to convey my acknowledgments for the expression of confidence of my friend, Mr. Long, and I only hope that I shall continue to merit it in full measure.

"After the concise yet comprehensive review of the Statement in your hands and of the situation generally by the Vice-President and Managing Director, any comments of my own would be quite superfluous.

"There is, however, one hidden yet dominant factor to which it is perhaps pertinent and proper I should make some special reference. I refer to that all-important portion of your assets, the Staff.

"It will be a matter of interest to you—and of pride, I have no doubt—to know that from a total of 874 male members of the Staff of military age at the beginning of the war, 520, or 59 per cent, have enlisted for Active Service and are now overseas. (Great applause). Of these, be it said, with feelings of the deepest and most reverent sorrow, 28, or one in every 19, will never return. Some 60 have been wounded, and by many high honors have been won for valorous deeds in the field. To these gallant young men, actuated by the highest of patriotic motives, every possible tribute of praise, admiration and gratitude is extended. But we must not forget their fellows, who, out of necessity, have remained behind, and who have been compelled, in the circumstances, to assume extra duties and heavier responsibilities. These additional burdens, I gratefully testify, have been cheerfully shouldered, and thus have they been doing, unostentatiously but effectively, their important share towards keeping the Home Fires burning against the great Tomorrow, when Canada will be rejoicing at the victorious return of her gallant sons from the Front. Let us hope the dawn of that momentous day may be in the not distant future." (Applause.)

Mr. Patterson expressed the appreciation of the stockholders for the efforts of the staff, and had no doubt recognition of a tangible nature was being given by the management.

On motion of Messrs. John Patterson and Alfred Piddington, Messrs. Vivian Harecourt and Gordon Tansley, of Deloitte, Plender, Griffiths and Co., were appointed auditors of the Bank, to hold office until the next annual general meeting.

On motion of Messrs. A. D. Fraser and John Baillie, Messrs. John Patterson and F. Hague were appointed scrutineers for the election of directors.

It was then moved by Mr. John Patterson, seconded by Dr. Alfred McDiarmid, that the scrutineers should cast one ballot in favor of the following persons as directors: Sir H. Montagu Allan, and Messrs. K. W. Blackwell, Thomas Long, F. Orr-Lewis, Andrew A. Allan, Lieut.-Col. C. C. Ballantyne, A. J. Dawes, F. Howard Wilson, Farquhar Robertson, Geo. L. Cains, Alfred B. Evans, E. F. Hebden, T. Ahearn and Lt.-Col. Jas. R. Moodie. This motion was carried unanimously, and the scrutineers declared these gentlemen to be elected as Directors.

This concluded the business of the meeting, which then adjourned. At a subsequent special meeting of the Directors, Sir H. Montagu Allan was re-elected President, Mr. K. W. Blackwell Vice-President, and Mr. E. F. Hebden, Managing Director.

NORTHERN ASSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED.

Mr. George E. Moberly, manager for Canada of the Northern Assurance Company, has announced that his Company is now transacting the business of marine insurance in Canada and that the well-known firm of Dale & Company, of Montreal, have been appointed general agents for the Dominion and Newfoundland for that branch of the Company's business.

Cables state that the Royal Exchange Assurance is absorbing the Car & General Insurance Corporation, of London, England.

Mr. J. N. Neumann, of Montreal, is a new member of the Mutual Life of New York's \$200,000 Club, and Mr. C. N. McLeod, of the \$100,000 Club.

Mr. William Stone, president of Stone Limited, and a director of the Bank of Toronto, has been elected a director of the Manufacturers' Life Insurance Company.

Mr. W. J. Carrique, president of the Canadian Street Car Advertising Company, who died at Montreal last August, left property valued at \$476,611, of which \$101,650 was life insurance.