increased by $5,891,745. For the year the increase was $6,969,668.

Current loans in Canada and elsewhere have increased by $15,755,096 as compared with $9,065,-982 in October last year.

The paid-up capital of the chartered banks now stands at $94,343,742, an increase of nearly $700,-000 for the month. The reserve is greater by $1,321,823, a good slice of this is due to the Bank of Montreal who have added $1,000,000 to their rest account.

PROMINENT TOPICS.

THE NEW CANADIAN TARIFF, seems to be awaited with as much interest in the United States as in the Dominion. The New York "Commercial Bulletin" discussing its probabilities, says: "Canada has been driven by our Congress to a policy of trade isolation from this country and closer trade relation with Great Britain, so far as this seems practicable without injury to herself. The policy is a bad one for both countries, but the United States is responsible for it and will lose by it.

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THE GAS AND ELECTRIC LIGHT QUESTION still hangs fire and till the wonder grows "what are they waiting for?" If this were a matter of private business between individual business men, or between commercial corporation it is inconceivable that so much time would be lost in settling so simple a proposition. Meanwhile the condition of the roads is enough to suggest the obvious solution of the whole matter. A fair share of the profits of the corporations enjoying public franchises would make Montreal an ideal city to live in.

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THE INSPECTION OF ELECTRIC WIRING of buildings is most important and can only be efficiently done by an inspector appointed by the city. The electric light companies inspect the wiring of buildings, but have no authority to enforce the necessary improvements. The same applies to the inspection by the fire insurance companies. No doubt, the salary of such an official as we have suggested would, if necessary, be provided by the electric and insurance companies.

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THE SMOKE NUISANCE.—As pointed out by the Montreal Board of Trade this evil is getting worse instead of better. Surely the trouble can be minimised at least. The condition of the atmosphere in some of the principal streets is sometimes intolerable. Those buildings which are notoriously the chief sources of the trouble, should be compelled to use smoke consumers or else to burn a good hard coal.

THE BALTIC.—The story of a treaty between Germany and Denmark for the closing of the Baltic in time of war against fleets hostile to Germany is plausible, but implorable. The scheme is impracticable for obvious reasons, and it must not be forgotten that Great Britain is the best friend Denmark has to-day.

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HIGHWAY ROBBERY is becoming altogether too frequent in Montreal, and obviously will have to be stopped at any cost. If necessary, steps should be taken similar to those that were taken in a similar emergency a few years ago.

QUERIES' COLUMN.

In order to furnish our readers with information we propose to devote this column to replies to correspondents. Letters should be addressed to "THE CHRONICLE, Enquiry Department, Montreal."

Answers will only be given to such communications as bear the writer's name, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and only to questions referring to matters of general interest in regard to which the Editor of Queries' Column will exercise his own discretion.

1598.—W. S., Cobourg, Ont.—The capital of the Hudson's Bay Company was originally £2,000,000, in 100,000 shares of £20 each. By return to shareholders the capital has been reduced and now stands at £1,000,000 in shares of £10 each. These shares sold recently in London at £129¼ each or equivalent to 1292½ p.c. of their par value. The dividend in the year ending 31st May, 1906, was £4 per share or 40 p.c. on par.

1599.—J. L. M., Montreal.—The authorized capital of the Home Bank of Canada is $1,000,000, subscribed $804,400, and paid up $609,240 par value of shares $100 each. The statement issued under date of 31st May, 1906, was for the period of five months ending that date. The first dividend, paid on 18th June last, was at the rate of 6 p.c. per annum.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

THE CHRONICLE has been favoured with a copy of the second part of the Illinois Insurance report for the year ending December 31, 1905. This has been prepared with the usual conciseness which characterises that department.

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SIMPLIFIED SPELLING.—A pamphlet has been issued by the United States Government containing circulars issued by the Simplified Spelling Board also a list of words designated by the President for use in the Government Departments.

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REPORT OF THE CANADIAN FORESTRY CONVENTION held in Ottawa in January of this year. This is an interesting report and is nicely illustrated throughout.