

THE MILLINERY OPENINGS.

The attendance of milliners in the city this week must be considered satisfactory in view of the fact that two large houses have postponed their openings until next week. If the week's visitation be repeated on March 2nd, 3rd and 4th, the trade will have reason to consider the outlook for the spring business of 1896 very promising. The new hat shapes are large, and much to the milliner's delight, need an abundance of trimmings to appear at good advantage. As a consequence of the extreme sizes of shapes, trimmings run to large effects. Ribbons in various designs and hues are popular, the widths running even up to No. 80; on the majority of pretty models shown in the warerooms large bows of ribbon were prominent in the trimmings. Ostrich effects are the necessary accompaniments of large shapes, and of these the trade made liberal purchases. Flowers were displayed in profusion, and although the manufacturers had little room for improvement, their productions are this year even nearer nature's models than ever before. It is difficult to single out the leading shades, for this season's millinery consists in a blending of many varied color effects. In our next issue we shall essay a more complete description of the spring novelties.

LANDED BANKING AND LOAN COMPANY.

The Landed Banking and Loan Company exhibits an increase in the cash value of its securities from \$1,862,000 a year ago to \$1,934,000 now, a difference which is nearly equal to the increase of \$83,000 in deposit and debenture moneys in the hands of the company this year. Deposits are larger; so are sterling debentures, while there is a falling off in currency debentures. Earnings have not been so great in 1895, but they were sufficient to pay six per cent. dividend, to add \$5,000 to Reserve, and to carry forward more than was carried forward in the previous year, which is something to be thankful for in a twelve month, when, as the report tells us, by reason of the limited demand for money, difficulty has been found in obtaining investments at remunerative rates.

AGRICULTURAL SAVINGS AND LOAN COMPANY.

The net profits of this company for 1895 were almost exactly what they were in the previous year. The management placed less to the Reserve, however, than in the former year, and carried forward a larger sum. The Agricultural has found the repayments on mortgages during the year to be satisfactory, the amount in arrear being less than the year before. The demand for money has been found fair, with a tendency to lower rates. The losses of the twelve months, although more than last year's, are still small. A reserve of \$138,000 has been accumulated, which is equal to 22.3 per cent. on the fully paid capital stock of \$619,000. It is agreeable to find the president stating in his address that the board has laid down a policy of making each year bear its own burdens, in pursuance of which they write off, from all properties in arrear or on hand, enough to make them safe. It is the view of the chairman, as expressed at the meeting, that our agriculturists, while increasing the variety of products of the farm, are also "practising a rigid economy, contracting few debts and living frugally." If the same can be truly said of all classes of the population, we may assuredly boast that Canada displays one of the main elements of national prosperity.

HOME SAVINGS AND LOAN.

The gross earnings of the Home Savings and Loan Company for 1895 were four thousand dollars less than in the previous twelve months, but the reduction of interest on deposits from 4 per cent. to $3\frac{1}{2}$ lessened the outgo by some ten thousand dollars. So that the directors were able, after crediting depositors with \$63,000 interest and paying all management expenses, to declare seven per cent. dividend, to put \$5,000 to Reserve, \$9,000 to Contingent account, and to carry \$1,333 forward.

Apparently the company expected the reduction of one-half per cent. per annum in the rate of interest to cause a marked decline in the total of deposits on hand. But the reduction has been but trifling, the aggregate due depositors, principal and accrued interest, being \$1,969,000 last December, where it was \$1,997,000 twelve months before. To place against this large sum, the company has \$200,000 paid-up stock, and \$207,000 reserved profits in the shape of Reserve and Contingent fund, besides \$1,800,000 of uncalled subscribed capital.

EXCELSIOR LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.

Very satisfactory progress has been shown by this life company during 1895, which completes the company's first quinquennium. The amount of insurance in force and the income from premiums and interest are both increased, while the death claims are remarkably light.

Indeed they amount to only \$5,115, which is less by \$1,790 than the interest receipts of the year. Another gratifying feature is that the expenses of management were \$2,700 less than in 1894, and this with 2,131 policies in force, amounting to \$2,525,000. The total assets of the company are \$181,661, and it is now able to show a net surplus of over \$6,000. The agents have doubtless worked energetically to roll up so good a volume of business. It would be more agreeable, as one of the speakers pointed out at the meeting, to have a smaller sum than \$23,367 of premiums outstanding. The company will gradually find the advantage of greater strictness in this particular in subsequent years.

WELLINGTON MUTUAL FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY.

An increase in the business done under the cash system by this long-established mutual is shown by a comparison of the 1895 report with that of 1894. There was not only an increase in the amount of cash premiums, but a still larger increase in the proportion of the whole business written for cash. The aggregate business of the Wellington is now not far from six millions, and the number and amount of new policies, as well as the total at risk, show an increase during 1895. The losses of the year were heavy, for, like every other underwriting body, this company experienced numerous fires, 118 in all, absorbing \$57,784, all of which claims, we are told, were satisfactorily settled, and \$52,208 of them paid, recourse being had to bills payable for the purpose. Accepting matters as they find them, the directors do not make any "poor mouth," but express gratification at being able to present so satisfactory a report. They did protest last year, however, against the "gross carelessness or something worse" that characterized the losses of 1894, and urged the enquiry by Government into suspicious fires.

ITEMS ABOUT DRY GOODS.

White lawn dresses are always in favor, owing to their good washing qualities.

Double-faced satin ribbons in black, dead white, cream white, stem green and violet, are in vogue for bows and ties.

The last few seasons the demand for stick-pins has been very great, and those handling such goods usually make a good profit out of them.

A faint attempt at a bustle is beginning to be seen at the waist, says a New York letter; it is very small as yet, being about the size of a silk handkerchief rolled.

A choice line of fancy cheviots, unions and cassimeres is announced in New York. These come in stripes, plain checks and plaids, and have been much admired by the trade.

Our Montreal correspondent advises us that the millinery houses of that city have their openings on the 3rd, 4th and 5th of March, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

The most popular shape in dress sleeves at present is the soft, drooping effect, gathered on to the shoulders. These are made as full as ever, if not fuller, but they are not stiff, and they fall very long.

The raw silk market in Lyons, France, has not yet recuperated from the effect of the financial and political troubles of the recent past. The demand is light; business generally is slow and prices are weak.

Business in the Dundee market is only fairly sustained, and progress is not being made as rapidly as could be desired. In the linen department manufacturers are quiet as a rule, and pressing for business.

A gown of fancy suiting is intended as a leader at a popular price. It is made of blue and black fancy suiting, of a medium dark effect only. The skirt, which is cut with a side gore, is six yards wide, lined and interlined.

Muddy streets, dirty sidewalks and more or less rainy weather may be expected for the next 60 days. This means mud-bespattered, dirty windows, unless special pains are taken by the storekeeper to keep them clean and bright.

A line of heather mixtures of silks, wool and mohair construction, in small and large stripe effects and broken checks, shows very attractive color harmony, and varied assortments are announced in Boston, to retail at about half a dollar.

The Dunfermline linen trade, February 12th, is in a fairly satisfactory state. In certain qualities of yarn there has been a reduction in price, and this has been welcomed by manufacturers, who found great difficulty in getting a higher rate for their goods.

The linen and woolen agents are booking good orders on the other side of the Atlantic, and the former appears more independent with regard to prices - especially sellers of Irish goods. Two-colored silk brocades are doing well, and black silks have been largely bought this week in the warehouses.