THE APRIL BANK STATEMENT.

The Government Statement of the Chartered Banks for April continues the good showing made for the three former months of the present year, but stands in about the same ratio to its preceding month as that for 1897, the difference, however, being favourable instead of retrograding. Looking to the item Bank-notes in circulation, April, 1897, showed a decrease from March of that year of $267,598 taking the statement under review, we notice the decrease is only $86,434. For a year prior to April, 1897, the increase was $1,159,950; from April, 1897, to April, 1898, the increase has been $5,028,728. This certainly is a favourable increase in the amount of money being kept in circulation for purely business purposes. The causes may be Yukon gold fields' reduced freight and railway rates, increased prices for products, proceeds of the good crops of last year, etc., etc., but the figures set forth the facts as they stand. Analysis the statement by banks, we find over half the number show increased circulation over the March statement. Of the Ontario Banks, two show an increase; the Quebec Banks 9, show an increase, Nova Scotia 6 increased, New Brunswick two increased, British Columbia increased as did also the Prince E. I. Banks. However, the amount was overbalanced by the other banks to the extent shown in the abstract, the Banks in Ontario deciding the balance. Deposits also have proved an important factor. The increase April, 1897, over same month, 1896, was $15,200,000. The increase April, 1898, over same month, 1897, is nearly $21,500,000, although the increase for the month of April, 1898, over March of the same year is much less than it was in 1897. The changes in amounts due American Banks and Agencies and British Banks and Branches are much in the same ratio as a year ago. An increase of $2,567,563 is shown in the Total Liabilities for the month, and $25,197,957 for the year, Total Liabilities being $268,619,023. Specie and Dominion notes show a small increase for April over March, but for the year the balance is reversed. Amounts due from American banks and agencies increased $44,851 for the month, and is nearly 3 1-4 millions more than a year ago. Amounts due from British Banks and Branches show a reduction for the month, and also as compared with a year ago. Canadian municipal and other securities increased slightly during the month, and show over 4 1-4 millions' increase for the year. Railway securities increased very much on the same lines. Loans on stocks, bonds, etc., while showing a decrease for the month of $1,303,017, stands $5,493,934 higher than on 30th April, 1897. Another important feature in the returns is current loans. Under this heading in the April, 1897, abstract, the increase over March of that year is $3,052,498, and over April, 1896, $5,992,849. April, 1898, increase over March, is $4,079,749, and over April, 1897, $5,930,456. These notable changes show a large and steady growth trade. Overdue debts, while higher than a year ago, are reduced by the April figures. The total increase in assets for April over March is $2,654,316, and over April, 1897, $25,173,481. Total assets 30th April, $358,531,075. The balance of the banks' assets over liabilities, $89,912,052.

IS THE POPULATION OF ONTARIO DECREASING.

According to a report of Toronto Board of Industries, the population of Ontario in 1897 was 1,917,544. The statement is made that, the population of the Province is increasing at the rate of one per cent. per year. This calculation is widely at variance with the census returns. According to the census of 1871, the population of Ontario was 1,620,851, in 1881 it was 1,926,922, and in 1891, 2,114,321. The increase from 1871 to 1881 was at the rate of 18.6 per cent., or 1.86 per year, and from 1881 to 1891 the increase was 187,399 or 9.73 per cent. in 10 years. If the population of Ontario was, 2,114,321 in 1891, as is shown by the official census, then an increase of one per cent. per year, would have raised the population to 2,241,000 in 1897. If, however, the report of the Toronto Bureau of industries is correct, which gives the population of Ontario as 1,917,544 in 1897, the Province must not only have lost all the natural increase caused by an excess of births over deaths, but, in addition to such loss, must have also parted with a population of 196,777 between 1891 and 1897, which, if true, is a very serious matter. We are inclined to regard the Dominion census returns as more reliable than those compiled by Provincial officials, whose work was not properly systematized, nor their operations so thoroughly organized as to ensure so complete an exhibit of the population as was made by the large staff of officials who were engaged in taking the Dominion census of 1891. It would be a cause for extreme regret were it established that the population of Ontario decreased between 1891 and 1897. But, before a correct judgment can be formed as to the respective degrees of reliability of the Dominion census of 1891, and the census made by Provincial officials in 1897, it would be necessary to consider the system they each adopted, as, unless they were identical in plan, and their classifications coincided, and both were as completely organized, there would be an opening for serious discrepancies. Knowing Ontario well, we prefer to pin our faith on the Dominion census of 1891, and to regard the decline of population in that Province as shown by the Bureau of Industries' report, to be not reliable. If the Bureau of Industries statements are correct that, Ontario is increasing its population at the rate of one per cent. per year, and the total last year was only 1,917,544, then it follows that, the figures of the Dominion census for 1891 were too large by about 320,000, or 15 per cent. in excess of the truth. We regard this as very questionable.