THE CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS.

Hon. George A. Drummond then said:

The statements now presented show clearly the position of the Bank, and will, I feel assured, be accepted as satisfactory.

In Montreal the new banking room to the rear has been occupied, and, giving as it does, ample and convenient accommodation to the public and the staff, has proved most satisfactory.

The old building had long been outgrown by the business of the Bank, which was being carried on in it under crowded and most unsanitary conditions.

The reconstruction of the old building in modern fireproof manner is now proceeding, the original facade alone remaining, and when finished the premises of the Bank in this city will, no doubt, be accepted as creditable alike to the architects, the Bank and the city.

It may be mentioned that the original building, fronting the square was first occupied in 1847, at which period the liabilities of the Bank to the public were $3,660,000, as compared with $93,534,000 at present, figures giving some indication of the expansion of the Bank's business and the accommodation required.

Turning to general questions, the most striking event of the year has been the serious decline in the market for securities.

Primarily, this has been the result of over-production of stock certificates, bonds, debentures and all marketable securities, in some cases the necessary consequence of great industrial activity, but in others due to excessive capitalization, the disclosures of which excited public distrust.

It is to be noted that such cases have been rare in Canada, but we have by no means been exempt from the consequences.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, which have made the receipts of wholesale houses occasionally slower than usual, the general trade of the country has been prosperous, as the following summary will indicate:

Dry Goods—"An unusually good year."

Wool—"A good demand at good prices."

Iron and Hardware—"An excellent year's business, at fairly remunerative returns, equalling those of any former year."

Leather exports—"An increase of late at prices netting shippers good returns."

Boots and Shoes—"A very good year's trade."

Grocery—"A satisfactory year's business, materially greater than last year."

Lumber—"A very satisfactory year, at prices 10 to 15 per cent. higher than last year."

Cheese—"The most profitable for years."

Summarizing the figures approximately, they stand thus:—

Exports of lumber..	$ 33,000,000
Exports of butter and cheese..	27,000,000
Exports of bacon, ham, eggs, poultry..	16,000,000
Exports of grain of all kinds..	28,000,000
Exports of flour and meal..	7,500,000
Exports of live stock..	12,500,000
	$124,000,000

And it will be noted a large proportion of the year's crops has yet to come forward.

The opening of the trade with South Africa promises well. Already an extensive trade in flour, meal, lard, meats, canned goods and lumber has been established.

As regards the business of the port of Montreal, very full information is already in the hands of the public, and it need only be stated that the tonnage visiting the port shows a steady increase over the past three years, the excess being 41 vessels and 350,662 tons for 1903 over 1902.

The abolition of tolls on our canals has been effective in increasing the business of the port, the exports of wheat for the season, from Montreal, being larger than from New York; nevertheless, our grain exports are below the figures for 1896 and 1899.

The cattle exports for the past season show a very great increase over any previous year.

The rapid development of the Northwest Territories, and the consequent increase in exportable produce, is amongst the most important of recent events. During the past sixteen months the Canadian Pacific Railway has sold for settlement over three million acres of wild lands; add to this the sales by the Government and private holders, and the aggregate must reach into large figures. It is known that at least 115,000 immigrants have entered these territories since the 1st of January last.

If disposed to attempt a forecast, which I have no intention of doing, it would undoubtedly be necessary to give weight to the great factors already alluded to. The prosperity of our farmers, the wealth pouring into territories only recently a barren waste, the full employment of labour of all kinds at high wages, and the great industrial activity caused by the establishment of many branches of manufactures; but I should also be compelled to enforce the counsels of prudence and economy.

I have much pleasure in moving:—

"That the report of the Directors now read be adopted and printed for distribution among the shareholders."

This was seconded by Mr. A. T. Paterson, and was carried unanimously.

THANKS ARE TENDERED.

Mr. Donald Macmaster moved:—

"That the thanks of the meeting be presented to the President, Vice-President and Directors for their attention to the interests of the Bank."

Mr. Angus Hooper seconded the motion, which was unanimously agreed to.

The Chairman—In the absence of Lord Strathcona, and in the name of my brother Directors, I beg to express sincere thanks for the honour done us.

Mr. R. B. Angus—I beg to move:—

"That the thanks of the meeting be given to the General Manager, Assistant General Manager, the Inspector, Managers and other officers of the Bank for their services during the past year."

The ability, integrity and zeal with which the officers of the Bank have displayed deserve this recognition at our hands. It is a matter of regret to us all that the General Manager is at present absent, having been detained in England by business matters, and also by a slight indisposition. But he is now well, and will be here in a few days.

The motion was seconded by Mr. R. G. Reid, and was carried unanimously.

Mr. H. V. Meredith, Assistant General Manager, said:—I regret that the General Manager, whose duty and pleasure it is to reply to this resolution, is not in his place today. He is, as Mr. Angus has said, detained in London, undergoing treatment for an ailment, which we are all glad to know is not a serious one, and we expect to have him back with us in the course of a few days. I am aware the vote of thanks to the staff, which you have been good enough to pass, is, to a large extent, one of form and usage. At the same time, I feel that the words of appreciation and confidence, which the mover of this resolution has used, coming as they do from one of our oldest and most successful General Managers, must prove an incentive, were incentive wanting, to greater exertions in obtaining the best possible results for your investment, and at the same time safeguarding the large responsibilities you have confided to our care.

Mr. A. Macnider, Acting General Manager, returned thanks, on behalf of the other members of the staff, for the kind words of appreciation that had been spoken.

Mr. George Hague moved, seconded by Mr. A. T. Taylor:

"That the ballot now open for the election of Directors be kept open until 2 o'clock, unless fifteen minutes elapse without a vote being cast, when it shall be closed, and until that time and for that purpose only this meeting be continued."

This was unanimously concurred in, and a hearty vote of thanks was then accorded the Chairman, who acknowledged the same.

THE DIRECTORS.

The ballot resulted in the election of the following Directors:—

R. B. Angus, Esq.; Hon. George A. Drummond, E. B. Greenshields, Esq.; Sir William C. Macdonald, Hon. Robert Mackay, A. T. Paterson, Esq.; R. G. Reid, Esq., James Ross, Esq.; Rt. Hon. Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, G.C.M.G.