

## HOW MILLIONS WERE LOST.

From the article "Banking in Canada since 1871," referred to at length elsewhere, we summarise that portion showing some of the principal losses mentioned by it as having occurred since 1875:—

The Royal Canadian Bank of Toronto and the City Bank of Montreal, amalgamated in 1876 as the Consolidated, suspended in 1881 with a loss of nearly \$3,000,000 of capital.

The Jacques Cartier Bank of Montreal in 1878 had to reduce its capital from a million to half that amount.

The Metropolitan Bank of Montreal was started in 1871 and wrecked seven years after. It lent money on its own stock.

The Merchants' Bank of Montreal in 1877 had to write off 25 per cent. of its capital owing to the mistakes attributed mainly to the late Sir HUGH ALLAN.

The Exchange Bank of Montreal went through a capital of \$1,000,000.

The Mechanics' Bank of Montreal had to wipe out 60 per cent. of its capital and close.

The Ontario Bank in 1882 cut down its capital from \$3,000,000 to \$1,500,000.

The Bank of Liverpool, N. S., came to grief in 1878, and in 1882 the Exchange Bank of Yarmouth had to reduce its capital from \$400,000 to \$280,000.

The Maritime Bank of St. John, N.B., had to cut down its stock from \$1,000,000 to \$680,000.

The Bank of Prince Edward Island managed to dispose of \$145,000. It united with the Bank of Nova Scotia, which also had to wipe out 50 per cent. of its capital.

The Merchants' Bank of Prince Edward and the Farmers' Bank of Rustico, P. E. I., also lost a considerable share of their capital.

Lastly the Federal, of Toronto, which has lost, variously estimated, up to a maximum of \$2,000,000 of its capital.

It was indisputably established, after some of the above collapses, that not a few of these institutions had managed to keep their heads above water long after they had reached the insolvent point by resort to the falsification of the monthly returns exacted by the Government. We have yet to hear, however, that either the latter or the shareholders ever took steps to punish this dangerous class of misdemeanants, as the law empowers to be done. To this impunity, for it is no less, may doubtless in no inconsiderable degree be attributed the persistence in a criminal offence which often brings measureless disaster on hundreds incapable, from many causes, of protecting themselves.

THE Montreal Investment and Building Society resolved at its meeting here this week to go into liquidation at once. The first dividend of 10 per cent. will be paid the shareholders next month. The assets are set down at \$280,000, with liabilities of \$271,000, of which all but \$7,000 is stock in the company. The real estate, which forms the greater part of the assets, will be placed on the market.

## THE FUTURE REASSURING.

THE agricultural possibilities for the present season are at length placed beyond all reasonable doubt, and over a large expanse of the country certainty has been gained by the unanswerable evidence of immense crops already harvested. The computations as to the extent and value of this season's crops throughout the Dominion have as usual varied widely, but it seems fair to assume that their money worth will exceed those of 1883 by some forty millions of dollars. The significance of this fact, in a population still so sparse as our own, needs no demonstration. It comes, too, at a time following a long season of cautious trading which has left few arrears to make up and when nearly all commercial avenues will be re-opened without being handicapped with the oppression of years of old back debts. Statistics have now for a considerable time past recorded how excessive importations have wholly ceased, the purchases from abroad having in nearly all cases been limited by actual present necessities. A similar spirit of wise caution has generally prevailed in all branches of industry, of which only one continues to-day at all sensibly overburdened. It is but reasonable to suppose that this, too, will soon feel the altered and prosperous condition of things just dawning. A guarantee is thus afforded, also, that the most serious depression felt by the railway interests for many years must now necessarily and at once pass away. We are already beginning to experience the beneficent result of that policy which has persisted for years past in forcing open our great North-West to population. Already its contribution, this year, to the general prosperity by means of the harvests it has raised, has had a most sensible influence on the total. Yet the development of its capabilities has barely yet reached its state of infancy—about what Illinois yielded some half a century ago. At least as much as the American Great West has achieved our own new territories are unquestionably destined now in their turn to accomplish, and quite as rapidly; and if urban development is to be slower the prospects to-day are that this will be atoned for by the more rapid filling-up of the agricultural areas. The remainder of the Dominion may already look forward to our new territories as soon to be most important and direct elements of our material prosperity if their people will but confine themselves mainly to that industry which Nature has so abundantly made easy and profitable to them. The recent fatal speculative mania in which they indulged has probably taught them where only the true source of their prosperity lies. That the legitimate channels of trade are at present, at all events, being again resumed is evident by the number of arrivals, both in this city and Toronto, of merchants from Winnipeg and the North-West generally. These have already presented themselves in decidedly greater force than usual, and

come prepared to do business on an exceptionally extensive scale. It is satisfactory to be able to add that the terms on which they propose to deal this season are thoroughly safe and acceptable. Coming nearer home a feeling of hope and confidence in the future is everywhere experienced, and the conviction is general that the depression so long felt here may be safely looked upon as a thing of the past, and that all danger of a new panic, or crisis, is over. The political economist's "cycle" has this time been conquered by the sickle.

## PUBLIC WORKS' INSPECTION.

WE see it stated that Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN has determined to repeat the very judicious policy he so successfully inaugurated and carried out some time ago. As Minister of Public Works he shrewdly concluded that the best supervision of new constructions effected within the jurisdiction of the Department over which he presides would be that of the Minister himself. Thus resolved, it will be remembered that regardless of all personal inconveniences Sir HECTOR proceeded on tours of inspection, covering all points of the compass, and extending over many thousands of miles. This new departure was productive not only of direct immediate benefit to the public by accomplishing a perfect inspection, but, by making contractors aware of the possibility of so thorough and severe an examination being always possibly impending, rendered the doing of inferior work unlikely to be attempted. It is to this thorough manner of disposing of all the duties that fall within his office, and which has characterised him since his first entry into the higher regions of public life, that Sir HECTOR owes much of that success which he has reached. No one knows better than he the value of the old adage, "If you want a thing well done do it yourself," and he does not allow himself to delegate, in important matters, what he knows he as chief can more effectually perform. The indefatigable Minister of Public Works leaves for the North-West next week, we understand, and will be absent in that direction till about the end of September. The conclusions he has arrived at at the end of his official tour will be received with general interest.

AUSTRALIAN DEBTS.—Some details concerning these are found in our reading columns. Commenting on them the Sydney Herald, the most conservative paper in Australia, says—"If the course of loan negotiations points to anything it points to this, that as the various parts of the £100,000,000 of Australasian indebtedness fall due they will be renewable on terms much more favorable to the colonists. And not only that, the colonies may fairly hope to increase their debts on improving terms. They borrow now more cheaply than when their united debts were not £20,000,000. An increase of debt seems to mean an increase of confidence and of security." What does Sir LEONARD say to this?