

THE ROYAL BANK OF CANADA

two becoming members of the Legislature. While they had rendered able service to the bank, it was felt that branch management in future should be entrusted to trained officials, and a policy was adopted that henceforth, as opportunity offered and vacancies occurred, only men who could give undivided attention to banking should be appointed local agents.

As the premises at Halifax had long been inadequate for the growing needs of the bank, it was resolved in 1876 to erect a structure suited to its requirements. One of the best sites in the city was secured and the building was ready for occupancy in May 1879. On March 3rd, 1880, the President stated "Our institution, in common with others, has carried its full share of the burden imposed by the dull times. It is now in a position to take advantage of any improvement in business when it arises." On this occasion Mr. Kenny also claimed with some pride that notwithstanding the long-continued commercial stagnation, the bank had always made a fair profit and had paid \$500,000 in dividends to the shareholders since its organization. At this meeting Mr. Michael Dwyer was elected to succeed Senator Northup, who had passed away in the previous April. Senator Northup had been the first Vice-President, and his excellent judgment combined with his intimate knowledge of the affairs of the province had contributed in no small degree to the steady progress of the bank.

By 1882 conditions in Nova Scotia had begun to improve, and the bank entered upon a period of renewed branch extension, chiefly in New Brunswick. But a more ambitious scheme was maturing in the minds of the directorate. The trade of Halifax was largely sea-borne and its merchants had long carried on a profitable exchange of commodities with its natural markets, the Bermudas, the Bahamas and the West Indies. In the hope of creating