

WOMEN AS BANK DEPOSITORS.

As the Christmas season approaches certain banks in this city and in Brooklyn begin to look for an increase in their accounts. In recent years there has grown up a custom of starting small bank accounts as holiday gifts. The well-to-do head of a family, for instance, instead of giving his "rose-bud" daughters jewelry or costly knick-knacks at Christmas time, presents each one with a clean bank book with \$50 or \$75 or \$100 placed to her credit. A large number of these "Christmas present accounts" were started last year, and in expectation of a continuance of the custom several bank cashiers have laid aside packages of dainty bank books expressly designed for feminine use.

There are perhaps half a dozen banks within the boundaries of Greater New York which make a specialty of catering to women. All of these banks are rich institutions, and in each instance the women's department has been eminently successful. At the outset this particular feature took on the character of a primary school in banking, the tellers at the women's windows finding it necessary to give minute and rudimentary instructions to their patrons. That was some years ago, however. The average woman depositor is a very independent and self-contained bank patron now. President Thomas L. James, of the Lincoln Bank, says that most women are clever at keeping accounts, and when once they have learned banking methods they are less likely to transgress the rules than are the male depositors.

"The chief trouble with women depositors is that they forget to sign their cheques," said a paying teller in one of the "woman's banks." "They soon master the details of drawing a cheque, but after finishing with the figures their minds seem to leave the cheque and pass on to some other subject. Almost every day I have to hand women's cheques back to be signed. One time I received an unsigned cheque from one of our largest female depositors, and as it was presented by a third party—also a woman—who was in urgent need of the money, I paid it. Inclosing the cheque in an envelope, I wrote a personal note to the depositor, calling her attention to its lack of signature, and informing her that I had paid the cheque on my own responsibility, because I knew her handwriting. Promptly, almost by return mail, I received a polite note from the lady, thanking me for my consideration and trouble, and promising to be more careful in the future. She begged to reinclose the cheque," etc. I looked at the cheque and it was still unsigned.—N.Y. Times.

THE LETTERS OF THE WORLD.

An interesting return, just published, shows that there are in all countries of the world a total of 200,000 proper post-offices. With regard to the letters delivered, and the revenue received in these places, in points of number and amount, the United States comes first, Germany second, Great Britain third, and Austria fourth. Over 2,600,000,000 letters are distributed in America. The post-card system in Germany is in much more general use than in England. This reason explains how it is that Germany keeps ahead of our country in respect to correspondence. The number of post-offices in Great Britain is 20,000, at which 150,000 persons are employed. The number of letters distributed in a year is \$2,000,000,000. The number of post-office employees in Germany, where telegraphic communication is a part of the post-office system, is 12,500, and the number of letters is 2,010,000,000. In Italy 350,000,000 passed through the post in a year; 120,000,000 in Spain; Holland, 100,000,000; Belgium, 125,000,000; Russia, 200,000,000. A considerable proportion of letters in Russia is carried in what are called "the mail-coach rails," a service upon which the Imperial Government maintains 53,000 horses. In France the number of letters handled in the

post-office is about 700,000,000 a year, the receipts of the department being about \$35,000,000.

BUSINESS IN THE STATES.

Failures in February have been smaller than in any other month, except three of the previous fifty-two months, with remarkable decrease in the failures for \$100,000 and over, though in number and amount the smaller failures show less change than might have been expected, indicating that in good times or bad a large proportion is due to causes apart from the general condition of business. The ratio of defaulted liabilities to payments through clearing-houses is but \$1.71 per \$1,000, a lower rate than has appeared in the first quarter of any year, except 1880 and 1881, of the past twenty-three years. The evidence of general safety and solvency is gratifying, while in most branches of manufacture and trade defaults are smaller than in February for four years past.

The best evidence of general improvement is the fact that payments through clearing-houses for the past week have been 28.0 per cent. larger than in 1892, and outside New York, with its speculative interests, 17.6 per cent. Compared with last year, the gain has been 56.2 per cent. for the week, and 49.8 per cent. for February. This startling expansion in the volume of actual business is not due to advance in prices. Wheat is not now higher than in 1892, while cotton has been lower and iron and all manufactured products. In spite of much reduction in rates, railroad earnings in February are 3.8 per cent. larger than in 1892, nearly all important sections showing a gain, while eastbound tonnage from Chicago for four weeks has been 400,955 tons, 15¼ per cent. larger than last year, and 3.4 per cent. larger than 1892.—*Dun's Review*.

PAINT MADE OF SEAWEED.

A ship bottom paint consisting of seaweed, which, while green and moist, is ground in oil and mixed with litharge, lead acetate, turpentine and linseed oil, has been patented in England, says the *Farben Zeitung*. The coating is said to be not only a good protection against the adhering of shells, but also prevents worms from entering wooden ship bottoms or any wooden sub-marine constructions. The mode of manufacture is as follows:

Into a certain quantity of linseed oil, say 48 liters, put one-half pound of litharge and one-half pound of sugar of lead and boil five hours at 600 deg. F. Now bring this mixture to the right painting consistency with turpentine and add one-half liter of seaweed, which has been ground in oil, in the green and wet condition, as gathered on the shore. For coloring, various substances, such as ochre, etc., may be added, whereupon the paint is ready for use.

AN ELECTRIC ICE BOAT.

A rather interesting and novel test was recently made on Chevy Chase Lake, near Washington, of an electric ice boat. This vehicle-sledge, as it might be termed, is the invention of Charles Steffen, who entertains hopes of its proving of great commercial value in northern regions as a means of transportation. The model which was tried at Washington was but thirty-six inches in length and fitted with a one-tenth horse power fan motor. Notwithstanding this fact, it is said to have successfully drawn a load of 940 pounds against a strong breeze. The floor of the car is mounted on two pairs of movable runners, which allows of the machine being guided in any desired direction. On the rear of this platform the motor is located. The propelling apparatus consists of a metal wheel, much resembling a circular saw in appearance, which passes down through the floor as does the centreboard in a sailboat. By means of a set of bevel

gears the speed of the motor is reduced and transmitted to a small sprocket wheel. The motion is again transferred by a link chain to a larger sprocket attached to the propelling wheel. In this way the machine may be geared to any desired speed. The teeth on the propelling wheel are pressed into the ice by the weight which they support, and it is thought that owing to this circumstance three or four feet of snow may easily be run over with a full-size machine.

With 1½ amperes of current at 110 volts a weight of 940 pounds was easily hauled by this little sledge at a moderate speed. It is proposed to equip the full-size machine with a 15-horse power motor to be operated by means of storage batteries. The propelling wheel will be ten feet in diameter and three-quarters of an inch thick, made of some non-corrosive metal. From the results obtained with the working model the inventor confidently expects that with a full-size machine he will be able to attain a high speed, probably 60 or 70 miles an hour. Over an evenly frozen surface such as a lake, with just sufficient weight to give the teeth a good hold on the ice, it is by no means improbable that a high rate of speed could be attained at times, but it is scarcely to be expected that such speed could be constantly maintained under working conditions. It is thought that some such device as this could be used to advantage on the Yukon River in Alaska during the winter season, but it is Mr. Steffen's intention to apply his invention more particularly to lumbering and similar commercial pursuits in northern countries where no facilities for transportation exist.—Boston Journal of Commerce.

SCOTCH INDUSTRIAL NOTES.

The Glasgow correspondent of a London journal writes as follows on February 25th. Although not productive of many new features, the past week has shown no indications of any slackening in production or demand in Scotch industrial quarters.

Full work has continued at the various iron and steel works, although prices have not been raised. Specifications are plentiful, and production is at the highest in the history of the trade. This fact has caused the men's representatives to call together the Conciliation Board to discuss the wages position. Engineers are once more working smoothly, and more than one firm have had plans prepared for duplicating works.

There is a boom in locomotive building, and builders are not merely booking orders for engines by the half-dozen, but by the score. Messrs. Neilson, Reid & Co., Hyde Park Works, Glasgow, have booked 25 engines, with tenders, for the Bengal-Nagpur railway, and 10 for the Egyptian State railways. The Midland Railway Company is asking tenders for 20 passenger and 20 goods engines, and these also are almost sure to come to Glasgow. The Swedish railways ask for 20 locomotives.

Shipbuilding yards are busy, all available berths are occupied, and enquiries for new work do not fall off. Good rates are being sought, and should nothing untoward occur a couple of years' full employment is assured. The Admiralty have extended their favors to another Clyde yard, that of Messrs. Scott & Co., Greenock, and that firm, together with those of the Fairfield, Clydebank, London and Glasgow, and Napier and Sons, are all tendering for four first-class cruisers. Other orders in the market are two liners for the Allan Company's New York service, a boat for the Castle Line, and a cargo steamer for the Cunard Company. But these are only a few. The tramp class of steamer is also well represented in the new tonnage.

—The *Daily Mail*, London, Eng., March 7th, announces that the Elder, Dempster Company, the Liverpool ship-owners, will build twenty-five new steamers to develop the service to Montreal and the United States.