

force 1st Jany., 1860. At that time sovereigns' doubloons, Peruvian, Mexican and Spanish dollars and silver coins of the United Kingdom were legal tender. The value of Treasury Notes of twenty shillings was fixed at 4 dollars; copper coins were called in, and cents and half-cents issued and made a legal tender for 25 cents."

We should have liked this bit of history to have been more expanded, especially explaining the relative value of the "pound" and the "shilling" current in Halifax in early days, and a statement of the process by which 9½ came to be fixed as par of exchange. A specimen of the entries made in the bank's books when the decimal system was introduced would be a very interesting exhibit, and would be valuable if inserted in a later edition. Reference to the annual statements shows that the old currency £ s. d., was left in use up to 1860, and in 1861 the statement was made out in both currencies, the ratio being 4 dollars to the £; thus the old style capital of £140,000 became \$560,000. What is called "Halifax Currency," of which \$4 made a pound and 20 cents a shilling, was universal in Canada, until a short Act of Parliament was passed changing the currency from pounds, shillings and pence to dollars and cents. In 1870 a serious defalcation by the Cashier was discovered, which was ascertained to be \$314,967 as result of investigation by Mr. Menzies, of the Bank of British North America, who was appointed Cashier. From this time the bank began to make more rapid progress. New agencies were opened, and the new energy infused into business. In 1876, on the death of Mr. Menzies, Mr. Thomas Fyshe was appointed Cashier, whose marked ability and conservative methods achieved results that brought the Bank of Nova Scotia into the front rank as one of the strongest banks in Canada. In 1882 the 50th anniversary of the bank was celebrated, when it was decided to place \$50,000 to the Reserve Fund, or \$1,000 for every year it had been in existence. The 50th annual meeting decided to apply for powers to enlarge the capital to a sum not to exceed \$2,000,000, some amalgamations of smaller banks being in view. The agencies opened since 1880 number 33, that in Montreal being established in 1888 and in Toronto, 1897. In 1894 the Bank of Nova Scotia gave material help to Newfoundland during the financial collapse in the Island. In 1899 Mr. R. L. Borden, K. C., who is becoming prominent as leader of the opposition in the Federal Parliament, was elected a director. In the same year the bank, for reasons made public, withdrew from the Canadian Bankers' Association. In 1900 the General Manager's office was removed to Toronto, the business in the West having so developed as to need this change.

From the annual reports given in this most interesting history, we have compiled the following comparative statement of its business at the end of the first year and years 1860, 1880, 1900.

|                    | 1863    | 1860      | 1880      | 1900       |
|--------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|------------|
|                    | \$      | \$        | \$        | \$         |
| Capital paid up .. | 200,000 | 560,000   | 1,000,000 | 1,860,000  |
| Reserve Fund ....  | .....   | 72,508    | 275,000   | 2,418,000  |
| Deposits .....     | 75,772  | .....     | 2,164,351 | 15,806,635 |
| Circulation .....  | 66,452  | 102,288   | 689,311   | 1,776,934  |
| Discounts .....    | .....   | .....     | 1,947,016 | 8,180,698  |
| Total Assets ..... | 343,472 | 1,621,544 | 4,344,057 | 22,552,997 |

The history of the Bank of Nova Scotia redounds highly to the honour and the credit of its founders and successive officials by whom its foundations were firmly laid, and the superstructure built up to its present eminence amongst our financial institutions.

#### THE MERCHANTS' BANK OF CANADA.

The 37th annual meeting of the Merchants Bank of Canada was held on 19th inst. The chair was occupied by Mr. Hector Mackenzie, Vice-President, in the much-regretted absence of the President, from ill-health. The profits of the past year were stated to be \$501,624, which, though not as high as anticipated, were regarded as not unsatisfactory. Losses fully provided for, and low rates in call money made an inroad into the anticipated profits. The two ½ yearly dividends at rate of 7 per cent. absorbed \$420,000, leaving \$81,624 of profits to be otherwise distributed. There was \$15,000 added to Officers, Pension Fund, \$50,000 written off bank premises and \$7,605 was paid in Government taxes. After these transfers the sum of \$59,705 was left as balance at credit of profit and loss. Mr. Fyshe seems a vigorous wielder of the pruning hook, as he has brought down the current loans and discounts from \$16,142,627 in 1900 to \$14,185,939 this year, a reduction of \$1,956,688, the money withdrawn from this class of business being utilized for investments and short loans. The Merchants Bank is in an exceedingly strong position, as its immediately available assets are equal to over 80 per cent. of the total amount of its deposits.

#### THE INSTITUTE OF ACTUARIES.

The Report is published of the 54th annual meeting of the Institute of Actuaries recently held for year ending 31st March last, being the 53rd of the Institute's existence. The members number 818, comprising 1 Honorary Member, 204 Fellows, 271 Associates, 324 Students and 18 Corresponding Members. The following papers were submitted at the sessional meetings, viz., Inaugural Address by the President. Mr. C. D. Higham, an essay by Mr. Hy. Moir, "On the Rationale of Discounted Bonus Premiums," which won a prize; "The effect of using the Lapse Element in calculating Premiums and