THE TRADERS' BANK OF CANADA

Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual General Meeting of Shareholders Held at Its Banking House in Toronto, on Tuesday, the 16th June, 1896.

The chair was taken by the President, Mr. Wm. Bell, and Mr. H. S. Strathy was requested to act as Secretary, when the following statement was read:

After making full provision for all bad and doubtful debts, crediting interest to date on all interest bearing accounts and reserving accrued interest on outstanding deposit receipts, the net profits for the year amounted to		$39,934 90
To this is added balance at credit of profit and loss last year		7,498 89
Making in all		$47,433 79
Appropriated as follows, viz:		
Dividend No. 20, three per cent., payable December 1st, 1895	$18,538 76	
Dividend No. 21, three per cent., payable June 1st, 1896	21,000 00	
		$39,538 76
Balance at credit of profit and loss carried forward		7,895 03
		$47,433 79

The subscribed and paid-up capital stock of the bank have been increased during the year in the sum of $91,600, all of which was placed at par without expense to the bank, making the paid-up capital $700,000.

The usual careful inspections of the offices of the bank have been made during the year.

The various officers of the bank continue to perform their respective duties to the satisfaction of the board.

WM. BELL, President.

General Statement 31st May 1896.

LIABILITIES.

Capital stock paid up	$700,000 00	
Rest account	85,000 00	
Dividend No. 21, payable 1st June	21,000 00	
Former dividends unpaid	161 16	
Interest accrued on deposit receipts	6,518 68	
Balance of profits carried forward	7,895 03	
		$820,574 87
Notes of the bank in circulation	$632,080 00	
Deposits bearing interest including interest accrued to date	3,528,734 96	
Deposits not bearing interest	458,636 91	
	$3,987,371 87	
Balance due London agents	699,650 40	
		5,319,102 27
		$6,139,677 14

ASSETS.

Gold and silver coin current	$102,621 81	
Dominion Government demand notes	323,906 00	
Notes of and cheques on other banks	99,699 03	
Balances due from other banks	97,630 46	
Dominion and Provincial Government debentures	555,537 46	
Call and short loans on stocks and bonds	923,882 66	
		$2,103,367 42
Bills discounted current	$3,830,065 01	
Notes discounted overdue (estimated loss provided for)	12,583 27	
Deposit with Dominion Government for security of note circulation	31,469 99	
Mortgages on real estate sold by the bank	500 00	
Real estate, the property of the bank (other than the bank premises)	19,070 37	
Bank premises (including safes, office furniture, etc)	142,621 08	
		$4,036,309 72
		$6,139,677 14

H. S. STRATHY, General Manager.

Toronto, 31st May, 1896.

The following gentlemen were duly elected to act as directors for the ensuing year, viz.: Wm. Bell (Guelph), C. D. Warren, W. J. Gage, John Drynan, J. W. Dowd, Robert Thomson (Hamilton).

Mr. Wm. Bell was re-elected President and Mr. C. D. Warren Vice-President, by a unanimous vote.

H. S. STRATHY, General Manager.

The Traders' Bank of Canada, Toronto, June 16th, 1896.

THE ONTARIO BANK

Report of the Board of Directors Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Shareholders Yesterday.

The Annual Meeting of the Shareholders of the Ontario Bank was held at the Banking House, Toronto, on Tuesday, 16th June, 1896.

Among those present were: Col. Sir C. S. Gzowski, A.D.C., K.C.M.G., G. R. R. Cockburn, M.P., Donald MacKay, D. Ullyot (Peterboro), W. R. Miller (Montreal), W. Moat (Montreal), Hon. J. C. Aikins, J. K. Macdonald, G. M. Rose, A. S. Irving, James G. Whyte (Ottawa), Nicholas Maughan, Louis Pinhey (Ottawa), R. D. Perry, A. E. Ames, Dr. Jas. Browne, W. V. Richardson (Pickering), John Hallam, A. Harvey, F. M. Purdy, G. S. Gzowski, jr., E. G. Fitzgerald, F. B. Polson, Thomas E. Frazer and others.

On motion Mr. G. R. R. Cockburn was called to the chair and Mr. McGill was requested to act as secretary.

Messrs. J. K. Macdonald, W. R. Miller and C. S. Gzowski, jr., were appointed scrutineers.

At the request of the chairman the secretary read the following report:

The Directors beg to present to the Shareholders the 39th annual report for the year ending 31st May, 1896, together with the usual statement of assets and liabilities:

The net profits, after deducting all expenses, interest accrued upon deposits, and making provision for all bad and doubtful debts, were		$77,180 03
Profit and Loss (brought forward from 31st May, 1895)		10,843 32
		$88,023 35
Which have been appropriated as follows:		
Dividend, 2 1-2 per ct. on $1,500,000, paid 1st Dec., 1895	$37,500 00	
Reserved for dividend, 2 1-2 per ct. on $1,000,000	25,000 00	
Added to rest account	10,000 00	
		$72,500 00
Balance of profits carried forward		$15,523 35

The sum of $500,000 has been charged to a special Profit and Loss Account and applied in writing off all bad and making provision for doubtful debts, and the General Statement for the year ending 31st May, 1896, is based on the assumption that the bylaw to be submitted reducing the capital of the bank by $500,000 will be passed.

Shortly after the last annual meeting, Mr. Holland retired from the bank's service, and on 1st of July last Mr. Charles McGill became the General Manager of the bank. After a careful examination of the bank's affairs, Mr. McGill advised the reduction of the capital stock to $1,000,000, believing such reduction to be necessary in the interests of the bank, and to be amply sufficient to meet all bad and doubtful debts.

After careful consideration with the largest Shareholders in Montreal and Toronto, the Directors determined to ask the Shareholders to pass a bylaw, which will be submitted to you at the annual meeting, and which provides that the capital shall be so reduced to $1,000,000 and divided into 10,000 shares of $100 each, and that for every three shares of the existing stock held by any Shareholder, he shall be entitled to two shares of $100 each.

The Rest Account has been increased to $50,000 and the Profit and Loss Account to $15,523.35, while the sum of $25,000 has been set aside to pay a dividend on the reduced capital.

The approval of the bylaw by the Treasury Board of the Dominion cannot well be obtained before the 15th of next August, and the dividend will be paid, under the terms of the Bank Act, one month thereafter.

The head office and all the branches have been inspected during the year. All of which is respectfully submitted.

GEORGE R. R. COCKBURN, President.

General Statement.

LIABILITIES.

Capital stock paid up	$1,500,000 00	
Less amount at debit of special profit and loss account, applied in writing off all bad and making provision for doubtful debts	500,000 00	
		$1,000,000 00
Rest	$50,000 00	
Balance of profits carried forward	15,523 85	
Dividends unclaimed	658 00	
Reserved for dividend	25,000 00	
Reserved for Interest and exchange	48,242 45	
		$1,139,423 80
Notes in circulation	$727,458 00	
Deposits not bearing interest	786,181 37	
Deposits bearing interest	3,379,878 15	
Balances due b'nks in Canada	24,416 00	
Balances due b'nks in Great Britain	234,407 10	
		$5,152,340 62
		$6,291,764 42

ASSETS.

Gold and silver coin	$156,948 36	
Government demand notes	327,307 00	
Notes of and cheques on other banks	222,311 99	
Balances due from banks in Canada	50,098 04	
Balances due from banks in United States	63,484 94	
Deposit with Dominion Government for security of note circulation	55,469 97	
Municipal and other debentures	191,040 12	
Call loans	203,280 01	
		$1,269,940 43
Bills discounted and current	$4,799,947 76	
Overdue debts (estimated loss provided for)	730 61	
Real estate (other than bank premises)	31,859 35	
Mortgages on real estate sold	13,750 00	
Bank premises (including furniture, safes, etc.)	172,061 61	
Other assets, not included under foregoing heads	3,474 66	
		$5,021,823 99
		$6,291,764 42

C. McGILL, General Manager.

Ontario Bank, Toronto, 30th May, 1896.

After a few remarks by the President and explanations by the General Manager, the report was adopted.

The following bylaw was then passed:

Whereas by an Act of the Parliament of Canada passed in the 45th year of the reign of Her Majesty and chaptered 57, the capital stock of the Bank was fixed at $1,500,000, divided into 15,000 fully paid shares of $100 each, And whereas at the Annual General Meeting held on the 16th day of June, 1896, the Shareholders present, representing a majority in value of all the shares issued by the Bank, deemed it expedient to reduce the said Capital Stock to $1,000,000, divided into 10,000 shares of $100 each, and approved of this by-law for that purpose.

It is therefore enacted as follows:

The capital stock of the Bank is hereby reduced to $1,000,000, divided into 10,000 shares of $100 each and such reduction shall be effected by cancelling paid up capital to the extent of $33.33 per share, so that for every three shares of the existing stock held by any Shareholder he shall be entitled to two shares of $100 each, and so that any holder of shares less than three in number shall be entitled hereafter to shares reduced in value in the above proportion.

This by-law shall take effect when approved by the Treasury Board pursuant to the provisions of the Bank Act.

The scrutineers appointed at the meeting subsequently reported that the following gentlemen were duly elected Directors for the ensuing year, viz.: Messrs. G. R. R. Cockburn, M.P., Donald MacKay, G. M. Rose, A. S. Irving, R. D. Perry, D. Ullyot and Hon. J. C. Aikins.

The new board met the same afternoon, when Mr. G. R. R. Cockburn, M.P., was elected President and Mr. Donald MacKay Vice-President.

C. McGILL, General Manager.

Toronto, 16th June, 1896.

Canadian Gold Fields.

Robert H. Ahn of Rat Portage is in the city. He reports four producing gold mines in that district at present, each of which is sending gold bricks to the bank at Rat Portage. In one of these, known as the Golden Gate, Mr. Ahn is himself interested, and, although work was commenced only a few weeks ago, it has already produced nearly $2000 worth of gold. The ore is treated at the Goldhill mill, which is close to the Golden Gate property. Mr. Ahn has with him a gold brick from his mine, weighing 38 1-2 ounces.

Mr. Hay, a director of the Dominion Gold Company, Lake of the Woods, arrived in town yesterday from London, Eng. He has brought with him two French experts, who will visit the mining properties near Lake Superior and Lake of the Woods, in which Mr. Hay's company is interested. An English expert is also on the way, and will follow them in the course of a few days. Mr. Hay talks confidently of large investments of British capital being made in Western Ontario this year.

The Balance on the Wrong Side.

The House of Industry Board met yesterday, Rev. A. J. Broughall presiding. Present were Vicar-General McCann, Rev. W. Frizzell, Rev. A. H. Baldwin, Wm.T. Ince, Ald. Jolliffe, Ald. Hubbard, Ex-Warden Massie, Ex-Mayor Kennedy, Mr. Beverley Jones, Mr. J. Bain, Mr. H. J. Brown. The treasurer's accounts at May 1 stood as follows: Total income $936, total expenditure $1230, leaving a balance against the board of $294.

Railway Rates for Elections.

The Grand Trunk system, with their usual enterprise, will sell between all stations on their road in Canada return tickets at single fare for distances of 100 miles or less, good to go Tuesday, June 23, valid for return June 24, and for distances over 100 miles good to go Monday and Tuesday, June 22 and 23, valid for return June 24.

CANADIAN

BANK OF COMMERCE.

TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS.

A Satisfactory Report Presented—The President's Address—The General Manager Reviews the Financial Situation—Causes Which Interfere With Material Progress.

The annual meeting of the Shareholders of the Canadian Bank of Commerce was held in the banking house yesterday at 12 o'clock. Among those present were:

Messrs. Geo. A. Cox, Robert Kilgour, Wm. B. Hamilton, Matthew Leggat (Hamilton), James Crathern (Montreal), James Neilson, A. V. Delaporte, John Tucker (Oakville), Rev. A. B. Lawler, Rev. Dr. Chafee (Coboconk), Thos. Walmsley, H. M. Pellatt, Henry Beatty, Thos. Gilmour (Brockville), Edward Martin, Q.C. (Hamilton), Thos. Gray (York), Wm. Spry, Philip Browne, John Stark, J. W. Flavelle, A. I. Hubbard, W. W. Osborne (Hamilton), F. W. Kittermaster (Sarnia), J. Lorne Campbell, Hy. Swan, Geo. Robinson, Rev. Dr. Dewart, John Nicol, Robt. Summerville, G. B. Burns, Aemilius Jarvis, John F. Risley and others.

On motion, the President, Mr. Geo. A. Cox, was requested to take the chair, and Mr. J. H. Plummer, the Assistant General Manager, was appointed to act as Secretary.

It was moved by Mr. Robert Kilgour, seconded by Mr. W. B. Hamilton, that Messrs. Philip Browne, J. Lorne Campbell, and H. M. Pellatt act as scrutineers. Carried.

The President called upon the Secretary to read the annual report of the Directors as follows:

REPORT.

The Directors beg to present to the Shareholders the twenty-ninth annual report, covering the year ending 30th May, 1896, together with the usual Statement of Assets and Liabilities:

The Balance at credit of Profit and Loss Account brought forward from last year is	$22,685 52
The net profits for the year ending 30th May, after providing for all ascertained losses, amounted to	466,623 44
Transferred from Rest Account	200,000 00
	$689,308 96
Which has been appropriated as follows:	
Dividends Nos. 57 and 58, at seven per cent. per annum	$420,000 00
Transferred to Contingent Account, as a provision for doubtful debts	233,560 00
Transferred to Pension Fund	10,000 00
Written off bank premises and furniture	7,500 00
Balance carried forward	18,248 96
	$689,308 96

The usual careful revaluation of the entire assets of the Bank has been made, and all bad and doubtful debts have been amply provided for. It will be seen that in order to do this it has been necessary to draw upon the profits of former years by reducing the Reserve Fund to one million dollars. We have had another year of severe depression, during which losses have been abnormally large, while throughout at least the first half of the year the profits were on a much lower level than in years previous to 1894, despite the hope expressed in our report a year ago.

The various branches, agencies, and departments of the Bank have been inspected during the year. Three sub-branches have been closed, those at Jarvis, Ailsa Craig, and St. Lawrence-street, Montreal. It was found that the main portion of the business done at Jarvis and Ailsa Craig could be readily transferred to the offices under which the sub-branches have been worked, thus saving considerable expense of management. The sub-branch in Montreal was established in a part of the city where we have found such competition in rates paid for deposits as to render it improbable that we could build up a profitable business.

The Board regret having received the resignation of Mr. John I. Davidson of his position as a Director. Mr. Robert Kilgour was elected Vice-President in his stead. As the resignation of Mr. Davidson was tendered late in the year it was not thought necessary to fill the vacancy on the Board until the annual meeting.

The Directors have again pleasure in recording their appreciation of the efficiency and zeal with which their respective duties have been performed by the officers of the Bank.

GEO. A. COX, President.

GENERAL STATEMENT, 30TH MAY, '96.

Liabilities—		
Notes of the Bank in circulation		$2,356,058 00
Deposits not bearing interest	$3,343,744 20	
Deposits bearing interest, including interest accrued to date	14,868,674 68	
		18,212,418 28
Balances due to other banks in Canada		11,456 02
Balances due to Agents in Great Britain		785,033 64
Dividends unpaid		945 37
Dividend No. 58, payable 1st June		210,000 00
Capital paid up	$6,000,000 00	
Rest	1,000,000 00	
Balance of Profit and Loss Account carried forward	18,248 96	
		7,018,248 96
		$28,596,160 27
Assets—		
Specie	$419,828 63	
Dominion Notes	841,755 00	
		$1,261,583 63
Deposit with Dominion Government for security of note circulation		155,530 00
Notes of and cheques on other banks		745,052 94
Balances due by other banks in Canada		89,796 48
Balances due by agents of the Bank in the United States		2,857,032 66
Balances due by foreign correspondents		11,431 20
Canadian Government securities, municipal, and other bonds		3,229,605 86
Call loans on stock and bonds		2,297,539 87
		$10,647,572 64
Time loans on stocks and bonds		921,424 97
Other current loans and discounts		15,803,183 89
Overdue debts (loss fully provided for)		191,605 68
Real estate (other than bank premises)		46,869 68
Mortgages		142,837 23
Bank premises and furniture		747,312 85
Other assets		95,353 33
		$28,596,160 27

B. E. WALKER, General Manager.

The report having been read the President said:

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

In moving the adoption of the report, I have to express the regret of the Board that for the first time during the present administration we have not been able to take a forward step. To bankers, as well as to almost all who are engaged in trade, the year has been one of constant anxiety and almost unexampled difficulty in making profits and avoiding losses. If, however, we had only to deal with the losses, large as they were, which actually occurred during the past twelve months, we would have reason to be satisfied with the year through which we have just passed—although, taken with the previous year, it covers the worst period for profit-making we have ever had. Still 1895-96 was sufficiently better in profits than 1894-95 to warrant the hope that before long we will be again upon a favorable basis. It will be noticed that it was not necessary to touch our reserve fund in order to provide for ascertained losses, but it is the effect of examining by the light of such a year of acute depression a bank's entire assets, not merely its suspended debts, and the properties which have fallen into its hands, but the entire current loans, which makes a year like that just closed so different from one of normal prosperity. When we turn to our statement, in other respects we find in it many gratifying features. The total of capital at command of the bank is about the same as a year ago, viz.: $28,596,160, as compared with $28,408,274. These figures might be considerably increased if it were desirable to do so, but deposits naturally do not grow rapidly under a steady lowering of the rate of interest, and the refusal to accept certain classes of deposits on which interest was readily allowed a few years ago; nevertheless our deposits have increased during the past year by $575,929, standing now at the handsome total of $18,212,418. The note circulation which a year ago stood at the lowest figure since 1888 has increased somewhat, although not very materially.

On the assets side we present much the strongest statement in the history of the bank, the total of cash balances and securities either immediately available or nearly so amounting to $10,647,572, while, if time loans on securities are added, the total is $11,568,997. We experience, however, a somewhat mixed satisfaction at these figures, because they indicate very largely the contraction of the mercantile discounts from which the profits of banking are mostly derived. For some years past the borrowing needs of the Canadian mercantile and manufacturing community have absorbed the capital at the command of the banks to such a degree that very few were able to make investments in securities, and the percentage of easily available assets was at times uncomfortably small. We have, perhaps, at present, gone to the other extreme, but it appears to be clear that when we are again in a normal condition the volume of mercantile discounts will bear a much more healthy relation to the capital at the command of the banks than has been the case for many years. We seem to be entering upon a new condition of things, under which a considerable portion of our resources will be invested in securities which, while safe beyond doubt, will yield a very low rate of interest, but may we not hope that greater immunity from loss will compensate for the lower rate of interest, and leave the net results equally, if not more favorable, to our Shareholders?

I now beg to move the adoption of the report, to be seconded by the Vice-President, but before submitting the resolution the General Manager will address you.

The Vice-President briefly seconded the resolution, and the General Manager then spoke as follows:

GENERAL MANAGER'S ADDRESS.

For some years past in addressing the Shareholders it has generally been a source of satisfaction that our Canadian business is entirely transacted in Ontario, apart from the cities of Montreal and Winnipeg. This cause of satisfaction has sometimes even been more noticeable in lean years than in years of general prosperity. We have, however, fallen upon a year in which amidst general depression the weight of it has pressed more heavily upon Ontario than upon any of the other provinces.

Agricultural Interests.

Diversity in our agricultural interests has secured to our farmers as a rule steadier results than in the other provinces. If one article of farm produce has fallen in price, another has brought a good return, or if nature has been stingy in the growth of one article she has been prolific in another. But during the past year there have been few good features to set against the bad ones. Not only were the grain crops, apart from oats, quite below the average in yield, but hay, which is perhaps more important in this province than any other crop, was a failure except in a few favored spots. When we hear of Ontario farmers having nothing to sell apart from cattle and dairy products, because everything was required to feed their stock, and worse still, when we hear of farmers in two adjoining counties having to buy hay at a distance, and at prices ranging from $14 to $20 a ton, we realize that this time, at all events, the farmer has cause to complain. The effect, however, in Ontario of a short hay crop might have been mitigated by high prices for dairy products, for cattle, pigs, and horses. But we had to meet precisely the reverse condition. A once large and profitable business in horses has been ruined by the substitution of electricity, and while a new trade is being built up with Great Britain, it is not as yet on a profitable basis. The production of hogs has apparently trebled in ten years, and prices have been quite remunerative, but since last year there has been a decline of one to one and a half cents a pound. Farmers to a considerable extent have accepted the advice of packers, and are now raising hogs of a better class, from which pork products of the highest grade are made for the British trade. But the decline in the prices of cattle and cheese has had the most far-reaching effect upon the prosperity of Ontario. After the farmer, in spite of scarcity in hay and straw, and in food for cattle generally, has brought his stock through the winter and has the usual fat, high-grade animals to sell, it is disappointing to have either to accept one to one and a half cents per pound less than the prices of fair years or keep his cattle. Some farmers have sold cattle at an actual loss, but many prefer to hold, hoping for better prices. There would be more prospect of better prices if Great Britain would remove the embargo which has so seriously affected our business of shipping live cattle. It is now evident, however, that the embargo is not a health measure, but a species of protection to English farmers, and there is no present prospect that it will be removed.

The cheese situation is even more instructive than anything we have yet referred to. The figures we quote from year to year are those for all Canada; but the results of the cheese trade have more bearing upon the prosperity of Ontario than upon the other provinces of Canada. During the year ending 31st March we exported 165,382,000 pounds, against 147,039,000 pounds for the preceding year. For this we received $14,114,000, against $14,683,000 the preceding year. Here we have the situation in an uncomfortably clear shape. We sent abroad 18,343,000 pounds more cheese, and yet received $570,000 less in money for it. Or, to put it in another way, if we had obtained for the cheese of last year the same average price as for the previous year, say 9.985 cents per pound, we would have received $1,830,000 more in 1895-6 than in 1894-5, instead of which we received $570,000 less.

Oats and potatoes were generally a good crop, but are both almost unsaleable. The fruit crop, a source of great income as a rule to farmers in some sections, was a failure.

It is not, therefore, strange that some farmers who have not borrowed of late years are borrowing temporarily from local bankers; that they are buying so sparingly as to seriously affect trade; and that as a rule it is difficult to collect outstanding accounts. On the other hand, farmers are paying the interest on mortgage loans quite promptly, and the falling off from the high percentage of implement notes collected is not very marked where credit has been carefully given.

After this dreary retrospect it is a pleasure to be able to say that the crop prospects for the coming season are excellent. Bad crops are much harder to endure than low prices. We do not often experience bad crops as a whole in Ontario, and we need not look forward to a repetition of last year. The fall wheat has in many localities suffered severely, but growing things of almost every kind are much further advanced than usual, and there is good promise of large grain, grass and fruit crops.

When we turn to Manitoba we realize the truth of what we have just said—that it is easier to bear low prices than a bad harvest. Many were ready to say that at the current prices for grain and cattle the farmers in the Northwest could not prosper; but the past year has shown conclusively that this is not true. The grain crop of 1895 in the Northwest was about 61,000,000 bushels, of which about 33,000,000 bushels was wheat, against a total grain crop of 32,000,000 bushels in the preceding year, of which 17,000,000 was wheat. Although there were the usual troubles from frost, exposure after cutting, etc., two-thirds of the wheat graded No. 1, 2 and 3 hard. Prices were such as would have disheartened anyone ten years ago; but the large yield, almost 30 bushels to the acre on an average, compensated for this. The enormous crop of oats and barley, 25,000,000 bushels, against 15,000,000 bushels for the preceding year, has as yet done little for the farmers, prices being so low and freight rates so prohibitive that there is little use at the moment for the crop except to feed to stock at home. The cattle trade of the Northwest continues to grow very rapidly. The first car-load of cattle was shipped out of Manitoba only in 1890, yet the export this year has been about 50,000 cattle, 10,000 hogs, 15,000 sheep and 400 horses. The totals are not large, of course, as yet, but the gain over the preceding year is almost 100 per cent. in cattle and 500 per cent. in sheep.

The result of all this bounty on the part of nature is that debts were paid to a gratifying extent, and the record of failures is considerably less than for the previous year. As the merchants have exercised for the past two years unusual care in granting credit, the country has materially advanced, and the proportion of farmers out of debt has perceptibly increased, while the load has been much lightened to almost all who are in debt.

At the present time Great Britain and other parts of Europe are receiving from the rest of the world the highest quality of food ever produced in these countries. The volume of this production increases at an amazing rate, and prices fall accordingly. Improved farm machinery is now being sold in almost every country in the world. Cold storage processes enable meat, fruit and other food products to be shipped from the remotest countries, and to be sold in London in competition with similar products raised in England. There may be occasional advances in prices, owing to temporary decreases in supply, but apart from this the fight will go on, and we must meet the new conditions be they what they may. Our farmers may be called upon to exercise a closer economy than they have ever known, and to lessen the cost of producing grain, feeding cattle, making cheese, fruit-growing, etc., as they have not supposed possible, but that they can meet the competition of the rest of the world in some departments of agriculture there is little doubt. We are glad to know that they appreciate more and more every year the splendid work done for them by our Dominion Experimental Farms, and by our Provincial Agricultural Colleges and Model farms. No doubt many of our farmers thoroughly realize that in order to keep pace with the rest of the world, they must produce results from farming nearer than they do now to what the Experimental farms have shown to be possible. We hope that before long the Dominion Government will enable the officers of the Experimental farms to demonstrate what can be done with financial success in cold storage shipments to Great Britain. Money spent in this way will probably bring a quicker and more lasting benefit to the country than many of the bonuses to manufacturers and other aids to trade granted by the Government. In a year in which throughout almost the whole distributing branches of trade, the merchants in dry goods, groceries, hardware and other branches, have oftener sustained losses than made profits, it is well to keep steadily before us the fact that our prosperity rests upon agriculture and that unless that is right other things in trade are not likely to be right.

Lumber.

The conditions regarding lumber are neither all good nor all bad. In parts of Ontario, where a large percentage of the manufacture runs to lower grades, complaints of dulness could scarcely be more positive. Manufacturers, on the other hand, who have a good class of pine, and can make deals and high grades of lumber, are finding little difficulty in making contracts even in advance, at satisfactory prices. The trade with Great Britain has for some time been in a quite satisfactory shape, while that with the United States is quite as unsatisfactory. The features about lumber which are the most uncomfortable are almost altogether in connection with the lower grades. Many things have happened which were calculated to bring this about. Southern pine displaced largely for a time, and still does somewhat, our lower grades for some purposes. In Canada the demand for such grades has been almost nominal, and in the United States it has been very difficult to make sales. To make matters worse, the great forest fires of Minnesota caused the supply to be abnormally large just when it should have fallen off. On the other hand, important buyers of box lumber, who have been trying Southern pine, have found it quite inferior for the purpose, and are returning to Canada, large purchases having been made during the past year. Pine is almost a monopoly, and with a return of active business in the United States, the lumber trade will doubtless be as thriving as ever.

State of Trade.

It is but two years since we were taking what comfort we could from the fact that the reserved wealth of Great Britain would enable her to bear the enormous losses which were falling upon her. Already things have so changed that trade there is prosperous to a degree very generally satisfactory to the whole people, which is saying a great deal. This quick recovery would doubtless also have been experienced in a large measure by the United States, were it not for political reasons, and we, who rely upon these two countries for our activity in business, would have been benefited accordingly. At our last annual meeting we were able to refer to a great change for the better in the United States for the employment of labor, with improvement in the gross and net earnings of railroads, increases in the clearing-house exchanges, and a great rise in the prices of many articles of trade, such as wheat, iron, petroleum, hides, leather, beef, etc. Part of this upward movement was speculative, but as the autumn advanced it became evident, by the railroad earnings and clearing-house exchanges, that trade in the United States, although beset with many difficulties, was steadily reviving. In December all this was changed by the folly of a chief magistrate, unused to international affairs, and unable to weigh in material results to his people the effect of a few hastily considered words. Up to that time the people of the United States doubtless knew and cared little about Venezuela, but for a long time to come the mere name will have a melancholy significance to many.

The President's message was at once followed by panic in business circles. The gold reserve, in consequence of the indifference of politicians to unsound currency conditions had fallen sufficiently by November to attract attention, and after the President's message it dropped rapidly, until about the middle of January it fell below $60,000,000. A new bond issue became necessary, and political pressure, aided by popular ignorance, made it expedient to offer the issue to the people generally. Had the $100,000,000 of bonds been sold to a private syndicate, covenants could have been exacted by which the entire gold proceeds would have been obtained from sources outside of the treasury itself. But the Government's real interests were as usual sacrificed to politics, and the bonds having been sold to the general public, a considerable portion of the gold required to pay for them was withdrawn from the treasury on the one hand and repaid to it on the other. It does not matter how indirect the means of accomplishing this may have been, such was the result. In consequence the gold reserve when the bond payments were completed was not very much in excess of the $100,000,000 limit. Gold shipments have already recurred, and doubtless recourse to bond issue will have to be had again before very long. It was sincerely hoped by all true friends of the United States that enough gold would be secured to make the treasury strong for a year or two, and this could have been arranged if wisdom, instead of politics, controlled such matters. While it was hoped that this might be accomplished, it was also hoped that the free silver agitation would die out, and the country would be able to direct its attention to the currency and banking reforms which are absolutely necessary if stability is to be assured. Only a month ago able business men were asserting with confidence that both of the political conventions would declare unmistakably for sound money, and that business might be expected to revive as early as the midsummer of 1896, instead of awaiting the results of the Presidential election. But again the politicians are far more powerful than the people whom they are supposed to serve. The majority of the people of the United States are not devoid of common sense, and therefore do not favor the coinage of silver at the ratio of sixteen to one, or at any other dishonest ratio; but it looks as if the rulers of one of the two great parties will declare that their adherents do favor such a course. If these politicians so commit one party, it is to be hoped that the other will have the courage and the sense to declare unequivocally for sound money. The people of the United States will then fight out the issue at the polls. It is not likely that they will condemn themselves to infamy and financial ruin by a course as dishonest as it would be foolish.

In the meantime, the Canadian banker doing business in the United States is often perplexed as to the best course to pursue. What with gold shipments and treasury panics, violent fluctuations in merchandise and stocks, and the desire to keep his funds upon a gold basis, he has little freedom from anxiety. He is hampered daily in his transactions by the free-silver agitation. If he lends money on time he requires a contract that it will be repaid in gold, and unless money is hard to obtain he gets this contract by a concession in the rate of the interest he obtains. If he lends money on demand he cannot exact a gold contract, and while the risks involved in this may not give him cause for special anxiety he can never be free from doubt as long as the subject of the free coinage of silver remains in politics.

The motion for the adoption of the report was then put and carried.

Moved by Mr. Edward Martin:

"That the thanks of the meeting are due and are hereby tendered to the President, Vice-President, and other Directors for their careful attention to the interests of the Bank during the past year."

Mr. Martin, in moving the resolution, said: I think it only due to the President, Vice-President and other Directors that the Shareholders should acknowledge to them their thanks for the great labor which they have had in managing the affairs of the Bank during the past year. The figures given by the President and General Manager show that the year has been one, beyond almost all others in the history of the Bank, of unprecedented difficulties, and it is greatly to their credit that the Bank holds so firm and strong a position, and maintains that position in the face of all these difficulties. We have, however, the future to look to, and "every cloud has a silver lining." It is awkward to forecast the future, because it does not always turn out what we would hope it to be, but in the natural order of events the Shareholders may fairly look for a more profitable year, and expect that this Bank, in common with the other financial institutions of the country, will enjoy its fair share of prosperity.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Hugh Ryan.

The President expressed his thanks on behalf of his colleagues and himself for the kind remarks that had been made in the moving of the resolution and for the cordial response of the Shareholders.

Moved by Mr. A. V. Delaporte:

"That the thanks of the meeting be tendered to the General Manager, Assistant General Manager, and other officers of the bank, for the satisfactory discharge of their respective duties during the past year."

Mr. Flavelle, in seconding the motion said: I think there is a special fitness in such a vote as this at this time. Whatever may be the results of the year's work in contrast to previous years, the very fact that it has been a trying year made the duties of the various officers so much the more difficult to perform.

Mr. Walker: I have to thank the Shareholders very much for this resolution, particularly on my own behalf. It goes without saying that to come before the Shareholders without as handsome results as have been shown during the last seven or eight years is as great a disappointment to me as to any one. We have to take satisfaction in knowing that we have done the best that we could under the circumstances, and probably the best that could have been done. This has been Ontario's bad year, and a large part of the Bank's business is done in this province. We have followed a very conservative course, because we have thought that wise, and if we have allowed the mercantile business of the Bank to fall off it was because we thought that the best policy to adopt for the time being. No bank is in better credit or in a better position to take advantage of any improvement in business. As to the Bank's earning capacity, it can do whatever any other Bank can do, but all we can hope for is our fair share of the general prosperity. That we will get a fair share I have no doubt whatever.

If the Shareholders will accept our frank statements and not seek to draw inferences which are not clearly implied, it will be easier for us to be frank with them. We have always given, and now once more give, the assurance that we have examined with great care all our assets, not simply those in default, but also the current assets, and have made all needful provision.

Mr. Plummer, following, said: I also desire to return thanks for the vote that the Shareholders have passed. What Mr. Flavelle has said is probably true, that our staff is more entitled to a vote of thanks after such a year as this than after a prosperous year. It is a great satisfaction to the officers of the Bank to come before the Shareholders with a handsome statement and a large addition to the Rest, but in a year like this the work done is a great deal heavier, not only in actual detail, but in anxiety and care. We have not a handsome return to make, and we have to be content with the appreciation of the Shareholders as manifested by this resolution.

Moved by Mr. Matthew Leggat, seconded by Mr. James Crathern, and carried that the meeting do now proceed to elect Directors for the coming year, and that for this purpose the ballot-box be opened, and remain open until three o'clock this day, the poll to be closed, however, whenever five minutes shall have elapsed without a vote being tendered; the result of the election to be reported by the scrutineers to the General Manager.

The meeting then adjourned.

The scrutineers subsequently reported the following gentlemen to be elected Directors for the ensuing year: Messrs. George A. Cox, James Crathern, William B. Hamilton, John Hoskin, Q.C., LL.D., Robert Kilgour, Matthew Leggat, and Joseph W. Flavelle.

At a meeting of the newly-elected Board of Directors held subsequently, George A. Cox, Esq., was re-elected President, and Robert Kilgour, Esq., Vice-President.

THE WOMEN'S COUNCIL.

Various Topics Discussed by the Executive Yesterday.

There was not a very large audience at the Women's Council held at St. George's Hall yesterday afternoon, but it was an enthusiastic one. After a brief but able speech from the chair and the reading of the National Executive report, five-minute papers were given by Miss Cayley, Mrs. W. Cummings, Mrs. Torrington, Mrs. McEwan, President of the Brandon Women's Council, on the subject of Manual training, nursing, the promotion of good literature, the inspection of factories. One of the delegates advocated the teaching of crochet, sewing and knitting to boys as a way of keeping them out of temptation and being of benefit to bachelors. In repudiation of the charge that women who gave their time to public questions neglected home duties, the president quoted a remark of Lady Aberdeen that Mrs. McEwan, who was so active as a publicist in Manitoba, was one of the best butter makers she had ever met.

Mrs. Cummings pitched into the Exhibition Executive for offering year after year patchwork quilts as prizes in the women's section.

Mrs. Dr. Stowe spoke on women's suffrage question, tracing its history in Canada and the United States, and its work for humanity. The "new woman," the speaker declared, was but a creature of the reporter's imagination. The meeting was brought to a close by the singing of "God Save the Queen."

Balmy Beach Notes.

This pretty resort is now looking its prettiest and every available house is wanted. Campers are already on the grounds and more are expected. Rev. Mr. Usborn has a camp of about a dozen tents and is evidently an old hand at it. If the village of East Toronto would only keep the roads better and burn a little more coal oil the residents say their surroundings would be perfect. Sunday at the Beach is most enjoyable. The perfect quiet and the beautiful scenery, along with the services of the churches, make it all that can be desired. Rev. William Patterson preached in the Presbyterian Church last Sunday, and the Church of England pavilion was crowded to the doors. Week-night service will be commenced on Thursday in the latter place, when the Rev. T. R. O'Meara will preach. A large first-class boarding house would be well patronized, as a great many enquiries are made for board.

Electricians' Convention.

The Canadian Electricians open their convention in the Board of Trade building to-day. Among the papers to be read are one by Mr. Charles P. Dwight on "Ocean Cables;" Mr George Black, Hamilton, on "Acetylene Gas," with demonstrations; Mr. F. C. Armstrong, Toronto, "The Outlook for the Electric Railways." Among the social features of the convention, arrangements have been made for an illustrated lecture by Mr. James Milne on "Radiant Matter," with experiments with the Crookes tube, demonstrating the Roentgen rays. On Thursday there will be an excursion to Lorne Park, where the annual banquet will be held.

Government House Reception.

The corridors and reception room of Government House were filled yesterday by members of the Presbyterian and Methodist conventions now assembled in the city from every quarter of the Dominion. The Cabinet was represented by Hon. G. W. Ross. After passing through the reception room the visitors promenaded in the gardens, where sweet music was discoursed by the band of the 48th Highlanders.

Opening of Small's Park.

This event takes place to-day. A string band will be in attendance. There are many attractions at this pleasant spot. The grounds are free of charge, except on Wednesdays or Saturdays or public holidays, when special attractions will be provided and admission charged. Bicyclists will be admitted free at all times when accompanied by wheels.

Dyspepsia and Indigestion, common diseases, but hard to cure with ordinary remedies, yield readily to **Manley's** Celery-Nerve Compound.

W. H. Buckingham, 396 King St. East, Hamilton, Ont., says:—"I was troubled with Dyspepsia and Indigestion for a long time, and could get no relief until I tried Manley's Celery-Nerve Compound, which cured me, and I cannot speak too highly in its praise."

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DIVIDEND NOTICE.

WESTERN CANADA
Loan and Savings Company.
66TH HALF-YEARLY DIVIDEND.

Notice is hereby given that a dividend of 4 per cent. for the half-year ending on the 30th June, 1896, has been declared on the paid-up capital stock, and that the same will be payable at the offices of the company, No. 76 Church-street, Toronto, on and after WEDNESDAY, the 8th day of JULY, 1896.

Transfer Books will be closed from the 20th to the 30th day of June, inclusive.

WALTER S. LEE, Man. Director.
Toronto, May 29, 1896. 444433

CANADA PERMANENT
Loan and Savings Company.
72ND HALF-YEARLY DIVIDEND.

Notice is hereby given that a dividend of 4 per cent. on the paid-up capital stock of this company has been declared for the half-year ending June 30th, 1896, and that the same will be payable on and after THURSDAY, THE 2nd DAY OF JULY, NEXT.

The Transfer Books will be closed from the 15th to the 30th June, inclusive.

By order.
GEORGE H. SMITH, Secretary.
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