

965. Proportion of failures to those in business :—

CANADA.

—	1891.	1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.
Total in business	75,589	75,860	76,856	78,793	80,666
Total failing	1,846	1,682	1,781	1,864	1,916
Proportion of failing firms to total.	2·44	2·22	2·32	2·37	2·37

During the five years the increase in the number of traders was 6·7 per cent and the increase in the numbers of failures was 3·8 per cent. In the United States the increase in the number of traders was 3·5 per cent and in the number of failures 4·5 per cent.

PART IV.

POST OFFICE ACT AND SAVINGS BANKS.

966. The Post Office Act, which provides for the establishment of Post Office Savings Banks in Canada, was passed on the 20th December, 1867, and was limited in operation, as regards the savings banks, to the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec. Under its provisions a deposit must not be less than \$1, and by Order in Council 7th February, 1891, must not exceed \$1,000, in any one year; neither must the total amount on deposit exceed \$3,000. On the 1st September, 1885, the system was extended to the Provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and the offices are now distributed in the several provinces as follows: Ontario, 448; Quebec, 123; Nova Scotia 48; New Brunswick, 34; Manitoba, 25; British Columbia, 23; Prince Edward Island, 8, and the Territories, 22, making a total of 731.

967. Government savings banks, under the management of the Finance Department, have been established in the Maritime Provinces and in Manitoba and British Columbia. In these, deposits are allowed to the extent of \$1,000. The number of offices under this system is 35, viz.: 22 in Nova Scotia, 8 in New Brunswick, 2 in Prince Edward Island, 1 in Ontario, 1 in Manitoba, and 1 in British Columbia. On the 30th June, 1895, there were 54,932 depositors with \$17,644,956 on deposit. Arrangements are made for the transfer of the Government savings banks in each province to the Post Office Department, as the position of superintendent at each place becomes vacant. Transfers were made during 1895—one in New Brunswick and one in Nova Scotia.

968. The rate of interest paid in both classes of savings banks was formerly 4 per cent, but is now $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, the reduced rate having come into operation on the 1st of October, 1889.

The Post Office system went into operation on the 1st April, 1868, when 81 offices were opened. At the close of the three months ended June 30th, 1868, there were 2,102 depositors, 3,247 deposits had been made, and the