

of produce, and as agriculture lies at the foundation of our Provincial, perhaps of our national, wealth, these figures must be very gratifying to every person interested in the prosperity of the country. (Ministerial applause.) As another instance which shows the activity of business we have this fact—that the bank circulation ten years ago was \$32,207,144, and last year \$41,320,083. Deposits in chartered banks amounted ten years ago to \$134,650,732. They have now reached a total of \$272,592,086. The railway traffic receipts in 1889 amounted to \$42,149,615; last year they were \$59,715,105. The number of failures ten years ago was 1,747. In 1898 they were 1,305. The liabilities ten years ago amounted to \$14,528,884; in 1898 they were \$10,333,630. Every one of these items contains much food for reflection. They accentuate the statement with which I started at the outset, viz., that there has been a great revival of business, and that we are enjoying an era of prosperity which has been gratifying to every hon. member in this House. (Ministerial applause.)

Companies Incorporated.

Another circumstance, perhaps not so well known as the statements already made, is to be found in the records of the Provincial Secretary's office. In 1898 that department issued 244 charters for the incorporation of joint stock companies. Last year 346 were issued. In 1898 19 supplementary letters patent were issued; last year, 37. In 1898 twelve licenses for extra-Provincial companies were issued; last year, sixteen. The totals of these three classes were 275 in 1898 and 399 in 1899. But the capital stock is the extraordinary feature connected with the issue of these charters. The amount of the capital stock represented by the letters patent issued from the Provincial Secretary's Department in 1898 reached a total of \$35,691,177. The capital stock represented by charters or letters patent issued in 1899 totalled \$156,696,885, thus showing the confidence those who have money to invest have in the various projects which are opening up to them, whether in the development of our agricultural resources or in the development of our industries. (Ministerial applause.)

The Receipts for 1899.

Having said so much in regard to the evidences of prosperity that surround us, let us turn now to the receipts of the Treasurer of the Province of Ontario. Hon. gentlemen have these figures on their desks, and they can see for themselves where we stand in regard to receipts and expenditure:—

From the statement in the hands of hon. gentlemen they will see that the revenue or receipts for 1899 amounted to \$4,096,494.96 in 1896 as against \$3,647,353 the previous year, or an increase of nearly half a million dollars in the revenue of this Province. That increase is not confined to a few items, although it is largely composed of a few items.

Increases in Revenue.

I shall just mention one or two items composing this large increase. First, we have an increase from the License Department. Hon. gentlemen remember that last year an additional tax was imposed on tavern licenses issued in our cities, and a tax was also imposed on brewers and distillers. From these sources we have an increased revenue from licenses of \$97,042.53. The incidence of that taxation is as follows:—From 12 brewers we received \$30,855.66, and from 8 distillers \$55,166.66, making in all a revenue from that source of \$86,022.32. We received also an increased revenue of \$31,020.21 from the additional duty imposed upon tavern licenses in cities, making up the \$97,000 already stated. I believe this taxation was borne without any inconvenience by the various parties upon whom it was imposed. I want to notice also that this increase in the revenue from licenses took place in the face of the fact that 88 fewer licenses were issued last year than were issued the year before. Owing to the amendment to the act in 1897 increasing the unit of population, by which a municipality was entitled to a tavern license, 88 licenses were cut off last year, making the number of tavern licenses now fewer than they have been since Confederation. Take the year 1893-4. We had 3,276 licenses issued in Ontario for the sale of intoxicating liquor. Last year we had only 2,976, a falling off of about 300 in that period of about five years. There is therefore under the operation of that act a gradual reduction in the number of licenses, and by the assistance of the act of last session there has been a substantial increase in the revenue. Nor does that increase apply to the Provincial revenue alone. Of course, under the act of last session the entire revenue arising from licenses went into the Provincial treasury. But extending our calculations over a period of five or six years, we find that the Province received \$1,656,375.93 from tavern, shop and wholesale licenses—that is, for the five years between 1894 and 1899—and the municipalities received \$1,597,441.44. So the entire revenue from tavern licenses has been almost evenly divided between the Province and the municipalities.

Decrease of Drunkenness.

One of the incidents connected with or alleged to be directly connected with the number of licenses issued for the sale of intoxicating liquors is the effect upon the commitments to our jails. Hon. members looking over the report of the Inspector of Licenses will have noticed that a large number of those committed to our jails are committed because of drunkenness. Ten years ago, that was in 1889, the number of commitments to our county jails for drunkenness was 4,573. Last year the number committed was 1,892, a very gratifying falling off in the number of commitments for drunkenness, through our police courts, and through the officers appointed to keep the peace.

There has been, as hon. gentlemen will have noticed, no increase in the succession duties last year, but rather