have to provide for ascending to the elevated level on the water front.

There is something like a general consensus of opinion in favor of a viaduct; or rather there is a very strong acclaim in its favor. It can scarcely be said that the preference is based on an intelligent comparison of cost, benefits, and disadvantages. The general public is, in this matter, very much in the hands of experts, and necessarily the City Council is in the same position. The railway companies know exactly what their own interests are, and their special knowledge has to be met by that of independent experts. The city must keep all the water front not absolutely required for legitimate use by the railways; but does it follow that a park ought to be made out of it? Such a park would have the advantage of coolness in summer; but it is far away from the residential part of the city, and could not be as useful as a number of small public squares in different localities.

The only way the City Council can be effectually aided in this difficult case is by practical, business-like suggestions, which can be considered on their merits. And we trust that in future those willing to render such aid will not lose sight of this essential fact.

RETURNING GOODS.

The habit of returning to the importer goods which the dealer at retail does not find saleable, or which he has bought in too great quantity, or which he does not like when he gets them home, appears to prevail in the dry goods trade more than in any other line of business. Why this should be is not easy to understand, unless it be that from laxity on the part of importers their customers have for years carried the practice to great lengths. Of course, if an order is "stuffed," and articles are sent which the retailer did not buy, he has a right to return them. Or if merchandise is shipped in bad condition, or of a quality inferior to sample, the return of it is justifiable. But the returning of goods which have been deliberately purchased is a trade evil which has been combated in these columns many a time and oft.

The return of dry goods without adequate reason is found to be a nuisance by merchants in the United States also. And from a new point of view it is thus referred to by the *Dry Goods Chronicle* of New York: "This habit of returning goods has grown to be a serious thing, and is a much greater evil than merchants imagine. When a storekeeper makes an error of judgment he should carefully consider before he returns the goods; he should ask whether it would not impair confidence in his integrity and weaken his credit with those from whom he buys. Spot cash buyers rarely, if ever, return any goods. It is generally the slow payer who often finds this a convenient means of paying a short time bill and throwing back on the merchant goods he does not want, or, if he does want, perhaps he finds a decline in the market and can buy at less price. The jobber has no recourse. What he buys he has to pay for. If he makes an error in judgment in style that is his loss, not the manufacturer's. When a bargain is made *stick to it.* If you have made an error in judgment by overloading or getting too many goods have the courage to state your case frankly and freely to your jobber and he will right it. If you have been deceived, demand your rights and he must correct."

It is worth remembering that, as our contemporary puts it, the habit of returning goods often reflects the cupidity as well as a lack of judgment of the buyer. It causes a loss to the seller, working harm all around. It entails expenses for freights and handling, as well as a loss on goods which are usually returned after the demand for them has been lessened and the price has declined on the hands of the seller. It is better to suffer a small loss and maintain a reputation as a good merchant, than to show want of skill as a poor buyer. Importers on their part should stiffen their backs and decline to receive such returns.

A COPYRIGHT MATTER.

A few days ago Judge Wurtele, of Montreal, rendered judgment in the suit Flaherty v. Boiler Inspection and Insurance Company of Canada in favor of the defendant company, dismissing the plaintiff's action with costs. Mr. Flaherty had sued the company for breach of copyright, in that they had appropriated to their own use a form of insurance policy which he had designed. After stating the facts of the case, the judge gave his decision, taking the ground that what was practically claimed by the plaintiff was that his copyright not only gave him protection in his literary work, but also gave him protection in the ideas contained in it. This latter claim the judge considered to be contrary to the spirit of the copyright law, the object of which is to protect the literary form and to encourage literary work and the spread of education as far as possible.

A similar contention might be made as regards a book which described a new machine, or a new principle of machinery, or a new chemical process, and if so, the effect would be to convert the copyright law into a patent law. As the laws stand at present, no examination is made of books copyrighted such as is made of articles which are presented to be patented; the book itself is simply filed with the department; it may or may not be itself an infringement on previously copyrighted books, but it stands on its own merits in this respect, the authorities making no investigation.

A case of Alexander and McKenzie in the Scotch courts had been cited as being in point, but in that case a Writer to the Signet had copyrighted certain forms under the Act. The holding of the court prevented the Association of Writers to the Signet from publishing a book containing the same form, but did not prevent anybody in practice from availing himself of these forms, or from printing them for use in practice, otherwise the plaintiff would have acquired, perhaps, exclusive right to the use of an Act of Parliament. The judge also cited with approval a case of the United States Supreme Court, which may be found in 101 Otto, page 99, where the principle of copyright is explained.

DEPOSITS UNCLAIMED.

The new banking bill proposes that unclaimed deposits in the banks should become the property of the Crown after eight years. There should undoubtedly be some term after which such deposits should be handed over by the banks, but eight years seems entirely too short. It is true that if nothing be paid on a mortgage for ten years, it becomes outlawed and cannot be collected. Land, if held in adverse possession for ten years by a person who has only a squatter's right to it, becomes absolutely the property of the squatter, the real owner paying the penalty of forfeit for his neglect. It is a principle of law that all derelict property becomes the property of the crown. The only question there can be about deposits in public institutions not called for becoming public property is about the time at which this should take place. But before forfeiture is declared there ought to be ample public notice of the fact that such deposits exist, and a full opportunity given to the personal representatives of the depositor, if such exist, to make good their claim. A return of all such deposits might be required to be made, even before the lapse of eight years; but following the law of real estate, forfeitures of dividends or deposits should not be declared before the lapse of ten years at the very least. There are indeed cases not a few of building societies as well as banks, where depositors turned up after a lapse of twenty years, and there is risk of hardship to such persons should their property pass irrevocably into the hands of the crown during their lives.

MINERALS IN NOVA SCOTIA.

The report for 1889 of the inspector of mines in Nova Scotia, Mr. Edward Gilpin, has been issued. Measured by that of 1888, the return for the last year is generally favorable, an increase being shown in most of the items. The contrary is the case, however, with the output of coal, which is about 20,000 tons less than in the year 1888; this we take it is because the Cumberland Coal and Railway Co. had not been working its Springhill mines as energetically as in the previous year. Increased freight rates have doubtless to do with the fact that sales of coal to Quebec as well as those to New Brunswick have fallen off. A comparison of the output of the two years is thus given by the *Herald:*

	1888.	1889.
Gold .....ounces..	22,407	26,155
Iron ore .....tons..	41,611	45,907
Manganese ore .. " ..	88	67
*Coal raised....." ..	1,776,128	1,756,279
*Coke made....." ..	29,808	35,565
†Gypsum ....." ..	125,800	147,344
Barytes ....." ..	1,100	.....
†Grindstones, &c..." ..	17,225	18,000
†Moulding sand .." ..	169	170
†Antimony ore...." ..	308	55
Limestone....." ..	15,448	19,000
Copper ore....." ..	.....	500

*Ton of 2,240 lbs.
†Amount exported.