

issues and other obligations, it is at times necessary to guard against its exportation lest those reserves be drained below the line of safety. We pass on to consider under what conditions an excess of imports over exports may be very disadvantageous, even allowing that, as a rule, such excess represents the profits on foreign trade. It is known to those who have kept track of our commercial history that Canada has suffered severely at times from excessive importations. When expenditures were being made based on foreign imported capital, trade was very rapidly expanded, as the consumption of goods was very largely increased. Importers bought heavily, so also did retailers. A standard was, as it were, raised for importations which assumed that the consuming, or the purchasing, capacity of the people would be kept to the high level it had reached while those expenditures on public works were going on. Then came a time when the public works were completed. But importers went on enlarging their stocks, and distributing them to retailers, the result being that, when the purchasing power of the people was lowered, the merchants were overstocked with imported goods and the whole trade of the country was disordered. A produce-exporting country like Canada is liable to this danger every year, as importations are made in advance of exports, and a bad harvest may render it difficult for merchants to dispose of their imported goods. This contingency furnishes a powerful argument in support of the development of manufacturing industries as they provide, as it were, a country with a second string to its bow, and, by lessening imports of foreign goods, proportionately lessens the danger which is liable to arise from over importations. A great variety of industries also, as an eminent German writer remarks, is promotive of and a sign of a high degree of civilisation and prosperity. The relations of different sections of home trade are more readily adjusted when a time of trouble arises than the relations created by foreign trade. When American securities were being sent home for redemption in 1893, and other years, owing to its credit in Europe being disturbed, such imports caused very serious trouble, which would not have been so aggravated if those securities had been held by home investors. Until we know what securities have passed out or in, from or to a country, and what its shipping has earned for freights, and what funds are sent to and from account of travellers, we are unable to estimate what is its balance of debt, or to judge accurately in regard to its balance of trade. Of one thing, however, we may be certain; it is more profitable for a country to pay for its imports, and to meet its outside obligations by its own products derived from its natural resources, or from its home industries, than to increase its balance of debt by such importations. It is also certain that, if our importers find profitable and prompt sale of, and secure prompt payment for their imported goods, there need be no anxiety over the balance of trade.

THE CANADIAN BANKERS' ASSOCIATION.

An interesting gathering—Report of Executive—Not opposed to an Insolvency Act—Other matters—Mayor Shaw on the signs of prosperity—President Wilkie's address—A Canadian Mint—Unwise competition 'tween banks—The present system of education—Good advice to junior officials—Prize winners—Elected officers.

The members and associates who attended the recent session of the Canadian Bankers' Association at Toronto were:—

The president, Mr. D. R. Wilkie; Z. A. Lash, Q.C., counsel, B. E. Walker, R. D. Gamble, H. S. Strathy, C. W. Clinch, Geo. P. Reid, W. P. Sloan, D. Coulson, Wm. Cooke, John Child, V. C. Bowell, F. W. Strathy, H. C. Secord, R. J. Montgomery, T. S. Harrison, W. Grindlay, C. H. Stanley Clarke, W. C. King, W. J. Robertson, M. Crosbie, T. A. Chisholm, O. H. Ireland, F. Carmichael, M. Morris, H. Jemmett, E. Hay, R. E. W. Conally, R. W. Gray, E. W. Jarvis, J. M. Wemyss, A. L. Whitely, N. A. Robinson, F. J. Dixon, L. S. McMurray, Frank Cole, E. H. Fuller, E. Andrews, C. J. Noble, W. R. O'Reilly, J. A. M. Alley, W. G. Browne, B. Jennings, A. R. Capreol, W. J. Kavanagh, W. Gordon, H. J. Coleman, Toronto; M. J. Prendergast, Montreal; W. J. Farwell, Sherbrooke; Geo. Burn, Ottawa; Geo. Schofield, St. John, N.B.; T. Bienvenu, Montreal; E. Stanger, Toronto; B. C. McHarrie, Peterborough; F. W. Holmsted, Dundas; C. White, Ingersoll; D. H. Charles, Galt; R. C. Jennings, Toronto Jct.; J. Aird, G. W. Hodgetts, St. Catharines; John R. Wainwright, Owen Sound, W. C. J. King, Berlin; R. W. Roberts, Waterloo; W. B. Torrence, Halifax; R. S. Williams, Goderich; F. G. Minty, Seaforth; W. Pringle, Stratford; G. DeC. O'Grady, Woodstock; D. A. Ferguson, Meaford; A. Gordon Tait, Montreal; A. S. Birchall, Montreal; G. E. Hague, Kingston; C. S. Rumsay, St. Mary's; E. L. Pease, Montreal; W. G. Hinds, Mitchell; H. Grasett, Barrie; Geo. Hague, Montreal.

Although the number present at the annual gathering of this important body was not large, the proceedings were of the most interesting character, and furnished the members and associates with subjects for thought and discussion the results of which will probably find expression in future numbers of the very carefully edited Journal of the Association.

The report of the Executive Council contained the following reference to the Insolvency Act introduced by Dr. Fortin, at the last Parliamentary session—a measure to which this paper devoted much attention during its discussion:

"Your council avails itself of this opportunity to disabuse the public mind of a false impression which appears to exist regarding the position of the association towards bankruptcy legislation. The association has never exercised its influence against an insolvency measure as such, but has strenuously opposed, and will continue strenuously to oppose, the introduction of clauses intended to deprive creditors of their equitable rights by way of ranking upon the estates of insolvents. All that the banks claim in this regard is the preservation of principles similar to those