

to be satisfied with cash reserves of from 2 to 5 or 6 per cent.

Balances due from British and foreign agents have been reduced by about \$4,000,000, and this amount, with some \$9,000,000 more, has been put into call and short loans, the chief increase being in those outside Canada, which have increased by \$8,000,000. Two banks, the Bank of Montreal and the Canadian Bank of Commerce, are chiefly responsible, the call and short loans of the former outside Canada having increased by \$8,000,000 and those of the latter by \$1,500,000. In each case there is a corresponding decrease in the balances due from agents in Great Britain, so that both of these banks have apparently thought it desirable to prepare for autumn demands by transferring funds from London to New York. The increase in call and short loans is somewhat unusual at this time of the year. They showed a reduction of \$2,133,000 in July, 1904, and of \$2,123,000 in July, 1903. The total now is \$94,874,000, as compared with \$71,635,000 in July, 1904, and \$78,263,000 in July, 1903.

Current loans, both in Canada and elsewhere, have followed the usual course in remaining practically stationary. Current loans in Canada now stand at \$438,069,000, as against \$414,096,000 in July, 1904, and \$363,586,000 in July, 1903. In view of the large amount of money being spent, or about to be spent, in railway and other development, and of the large crop in the North-West, it seems probable that the next three or four months will see a considerable increase, with, no doubt, a corresponding decrease in call and short loans.

One of the most significant indications of the prosperity which the banks have enjoyed during the last few years is the reduction in "lock-ups," as is very clearly shown by the following figures:

	Overdue Debts.	Real Estate other than Bank Premises.	Mortgages.
July, 1905	\$1,699,000	\$ 767,000	\$530,000
1903	2,199,000	835,000	724,000
1901	1,957,000	907,000	664,000
1899	2,160,000	1,766,000	576,000
1897	3,591,000	2,043,000	506,000

In 1897 the total assets of the banks amounted to \$338,244,000, and of this sum \$6,140,000, or 1.8 per cent., was shown under the three headings given above. In 1905 the total assets are \$766,318,000, but the amount of the "lock-ups" is now only \$2,996,000, about .4 per cent. But it must be remembered that La Banque du Peuple was in process of liquidation in 1897, so that the figures for that year were not altogether normal.

Bank premises, on the other hand, have increased from \$5,638,000 in 1897 to \$10,577,000 in 1905, but in view of the rapid extension of branches during the last few years, and the immense amount of building which the banks have thought it necessary to do, the increase cannot be considered excessive. Different banks, however, deal with their Bank Premises accounts in different ways. The Bank of Montreal, which, as everyone knows, has recently spent a very large amount on its principal building in Montreal, and owns fine buildings in many parts of the country, shows no increase since 1897. The trifling amount of \$600,000 at which all its premises have for some years been carried is only a fraction

of the real value of its buildings. The Canadian Bank of Commerce, which has been one of the most active in the establishment of new branches, and which took over in January, 1901, from the Bank of British Columbia premises valued in their last statement at \$150,000, has increased its figures from \$759,000 to \$1,000,000. In its Profit and Loss statement each year this bank appropriates a considerable sum on account of Bank Premises, while the Bank of Montreal does its writing off before carrying anything to profits. Among the other larger banks which show increases of not more than 100 per cent. are the Merchants Bank of Canada, \$559,000 to \$894,000; the Bank of Toronto, \$200,000 to \$365,000, and the Dominion Bank, \$263,000 to \$440,000. On the other hand, the account of the Bank of Nova Scotia has grown from \$50,000 to \$247,000 (still an absurdly small figure), the Bank of British North America from \$350,000 to \$865,000, the Eastern Townships Bank from \$120,000 to \$413,000, the Union Bank of Canada from \$200,000 to \$1,044,000, the Royal Bank of Canada from \$60,000 to \$432,000, and the Imperial Bank of Canada from \$311,000 to \$715,000. But with all the increases only 1.3 per cent. of the total assets of the banks is in their Bank Premises accounts, as compared with 1.6 per cent. in 1897.

PROGRESS ON THE GRAND TRUNK PACIFIC.

Something like definite progress is reported respecting the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. We hear from Montreal that contracts for the construction of the line from Winnipeg to the Pacific coast and also of the branch lines from Fort William to Lake Superior Junction, have been awarded to the National Construction Company. This corporation is composed of prominent Canadian capitalists, who will proceed, we presume, much as the North American Construction Company did with the building of the C.P.R. Specifications for the first hundred miles of the Lake Superior branch of the G.T.P. show prospects of very heavy work, for there are two thousand acres of clearing, 300,000 yards of solid rock and 250,000 yards of loose rock. In addition there are said to be six million yards of earthwork, or sixty thousand per mile. This piece of work has been already financed, the bond issue of \$30,000 a mile being guaranteed by the Grand Trunk Railway Company, and there being an additional land grant from the Ontario Government.

THE METRIC SYSTEM AGAIN.

Instead of diminishing with the increasing fervor of its adherents, the opposition to the compulsory adoption of the metric system in the British Isles would appear to be actually becoming stronger. And—which, by the way, is an item to be remembered by those among us who characterize criticism of the metric system as a sign of fossil-like conservatism—its opponents assuredly include in their number a large proportion of up-to-date men engaged largely in enterprises requiring weighing and measuring as prime elements, besides several who hold a high place in science. The British Weights and Measures Association, a body which does its best to crystallize the objections to the proposed system, does not enter the lists on scientific grounds. On the other hand it admits the usefulness of the metric system in scientific