A RETROSPECT AND A WARNING.

The New York *Tribune* reminds us that six years ago the week ending September 20 witnessed the failure of Jay Cooke & Co, Fisk & Hatch, the Union Trust Company, and many other firms; loans were made at 1½ per cent. per day; the Exchange and the Clearing House were compelled to close their doors; and the banks reported reserves $3,211,075 below the legal requirement, with a rapid depletion in progress, only $34,307,900 in legal-tenders on hand, and the specie reserve absolutely useless. That was the beginning of the long period of prostration and disaster which has now been brought to an end by the resumption of specie payments. The week ending September 20, 1879, saw a sharp recovery of $2,548,300 in the legal-tender reserve, which is now $42,029,400; a slight increase in the specie reserve of $19,942,000, which is wholly and instantly available in case of need; an arrival of over *$5,000,000 in specie from abroad, making about $24,000,000* thus received within five weeks; an easy money market, with loans as low as 4½ per cent. yearly; a growing *business in all branches, and not a single failure.* Yet the New-York money market and the banks of this city have been subjected this year to a strain much more severe, both in respect to the drain upon their resources and in respect to the volume of legitimate and speculative business to be sustained, than that under which they broke down in 1873. The aggregate of exchanges for seven weeks prior to the panic of 1873 was only $3,317,054,844, while the aggregate for the corresponding weeks in 1879 has been $3,575,471,581, showing an excess of $258,400,000 in payments made. The legal-tenders in the banks were reduced during the same period in 1873 only $13,321,300, while the loss of legal-tenders by the banks this year was $18,174,000 during the corresponding weeks, notwithstanding the fact that the Treasury had in that time paid out $11,624,645 more currency than it received. In short, the ability of the banking system and the money market to resist an enormous strain, without any panic or stringency, is directly attributable to the resumption of specie payments, by which the market not only utilizes the gold reserve on hand, but is enabled to call upon all the markets of the world for specie at any moment of need.

After tracing the events that have brought about the return of prosperity in the United States, the *Tribune* goes on to hold out the following warning against a too great inflation, which may well be carefully heeded by Canadians as well as Americans:

There is much danger that the advance in prices of *breadstuffs, iron, and some other articles, has been so rapid* and large as to cause a disastrous reaction. Speculation has rightly anticipated that a great quantity of wheat will be demanded from this country by Europe, but the price has been so rapidly advanced that exports have been checked, and it is certain that nothing but a continued and free outflow of grain from this country will prevent a fall of prices to very low figures. Speculation may easily kill the hen that lays the golden egg, if it holds prices so high as to check materially consumption of wheat in Europe, and this may the more easily happen because in those countries the people habitually use substitutes for wheat to a large extent when its price is high. As yet, however, grain continues to come forward from the West in great quantity, and trade is in *all its branches thriving* remarkably. The exchanges at New York last week were about 60 per cent. larger than those of the corresponding week last year, but nearly half of this increase was due to the activity of speculation. In the iron business, the number of furnaces going into blast is already so great that an excess of production over demand is feared, and in the cotton manufacture the advance in prices has been sufficient to encourage some important strikes. These evils will *soon correct themselves, with a sound currency*, but it would be better if the evils and the losses which bring the correction could be avoided by greater moderation in the speculative advance of prices.

THE LUMBER TRADE.—*It is estimated that the* lumber production of the Northwestern States will fall fully eight hundred million feet below the expected amount, and that in consequence of the inferior quality of the logs cut, the supply of choice lumber to meet the demand will be small. From the 1st of January up to September 19th last, the receipts of lumber in Chicago footed up to 993,597,207 feet as compared with 752,908,682 feet for the corresponding period of 1878, showing an increase for the present year *of 240,688,525 feet. Should it be found that the esti*mates of the decrease in the lumber production of the Northwestern regions are approximately correct, *a further* increase in the demand for Canadian lumber may be looked for. In Quebec there has been an extensive movement in *timber during the past three weeks, and a fairly active* demand has set in.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK RETURN.

Balance in hands of Minister of Finance, 31st July, 1879	$3,156,123.21
Deposited during month	409,057.00
Interest allowed during month	166.95
	$3,567,347.16
Withdrawn during month	106,650.85
Written off accounts, and invested on behalf of depositors in 5 per cent. Dominion Stock during month	24,600.00
Balance remaining on hand, 31st August	3,436,096.31
	$3,567,347.16
Increase for month	$ 277,973.10
Invested in Government stock during month.	24,600.00
	$ 302,573.10

THE NATIONAL MERCANTILE BANK.

The Manager of the above bank, a Mr. George William Thompson, has been recently sending the following circular to solicitors and others:

"DEAR SIR,—Allow me to bring under your notice the above Bank, and to inform you that if at any time you have clients who wish to deposit money or require an advance upon the mortgage of their furniture, stock, plant, or growing crops, I shall be most happy to attend to any application from you upon the terms mentioned in the following page, and which are fair and reasonable, considering the risk attending this class of security. The large amount of capital at my command enables me to complete all advances within two or three days after application."

Now the following is a specimen of the terms which Mr. George William Thompson considers fair and reasonable.

If a client wishes to borrow £100 for six months, the bank is willing to lend it in consideration of the borrower *undertaking to repay it* by six monthly instalments of £20 each, and of course giving a mortgage upon his "furniture, stock, plant, or growing crops" The £20 charged over and above the amount actually advanced is to cover the "interest and costs of the mortgage," and includes a commission of £2 given to the solicitor or other person who may have *introduced the victim. With supreme* assurance, Mr. Geo. Wm. Thompson adds: "Many offices profess to lend money upon the mortgage of furniture, &c., at £5 per cent., but it is only a trap to catch the unwary; they mean £5 per cent. per month, not per annum."

Now what does Mr. George William Thompson's offer come to? Why, it amounts to this, that, including interest and cost of mortgage, any one availing themselves of his assistance for the loan of £100, repayable in six monthly instalments, would be borrowing money at about £80 per cent. per annum. It is really disgraceful that an individual or individuals should be allowed to carry on such a trade as this under the pretext of being bankers. The harm they do is incalculable; for Mr. Thompson, the aforesaid Manager, makes a boast in his circular that his "bank" "lends more money annually than any two or three (combined) of the largest advance offices or deposit banks throughout England." The cool audacity of the whole circular, and the impudence with which it is sent to respectable solicitors seeking their co-operation, would be amusing were it not for the knowledge that there are many people insane enough to be misled by them. Mr. Thompson says that other offices set traps for the unwary. I wonder *how he defines his own circular, or rather that of the* National Mercantile Bank (Limited).—*Truth.*

COAL IN MANITOBA.—Among the exhibits sent by Manitoba to the provincial fair at Ottawa, are specimens of coal from the Saskatchewan country, somewhat soft and imperfect in fossilization, say the reports, but still combustible coal. We are told by the Emerson *International* that parties at Bismarck, in Dakota, are opening a coal mine about twenty-five miles west of that place, where the vein is four feet thick, and expect to lay down coal in Bismarck at $3.25 per ton. Very fine specimens of lignite from the Souris river, a stream flowing into the Assiniboine about 150 miles north-west of Emerson, have led to *the formation of a company to begin mining* there next year. The country west of the Missouri River abounds in coal beds. A writer in the paper named, in making a trip across the country last fall, to the Yellowstone Valley, frequently observed beds of coal cropping out from the banks of the streams and the sides of ravines. These same formations extend north of the international boundary line. The Winnipeg press thinks that in a very few years time a railway running westward will tap these coal fields and lay down coal at that city at the figure quoted above. The Mennonites have, it appears, offered to grade, free of charge, a road, from Emerson westward through their reserve. May their liberality be rewarded, and may these important coal measures soon be explored and successfully worked.

THE *Simplon tunnel project, which political and other* complications in France have kept in abeyance until quite recently, has again come to the front, through the *persistence of its French advocates, and in such form as* renders its actual realization highly probable. The London *Times*, of recent date, has quite a long account of the *latest phases of the tunnel project, from which we gather* the following facts: The French projectors of the enterprise, according to this authority, are now negociating *with the Swiss government for a treaty similar to the one* executed in relation to the tunnel of St. Gothard. The French Minister of Finance, M. Léon Say, has made a *personal inspection of the site of the tunnel, and of the* works which have already been completed by the company, in order to satisfy himself as to the advisability of recom*mending the grant of a subsidy by the French government* in aid of the enterprise, should the treaty negociations now pending be satisfactorily concluded. These works consist *of a line of railway (lately completed and opened to traffic)* extending from Lausanne up the valley of the Rhone to Brigue, at the foot of the Simplon, and at the point where *it is proposed to pierce the mountain. The subsidy asked* for, by the projectors, of the French government is the sum of 48,000,000 francs. On the other side of the *mountain, the Italian government is engaged in the* completion of a line of railway which will unite Iselle, the proposed southern terminus of the tunnel, with Arona, on *Lake Maggiore, the present northern terminus of the* Haute Italie railways. The piercing of the mountain by the Simplon Railway Company will complete a direct line of *railway from Paris to Brindisi, via Pontarlier, Lausanne,* the Simplon, and Milan, and will obviate the great *détour* necessitated by the Mont Cenis route.

The Simplon tunnel here proposed will be no longer than either the Mont Cenis or the St. Gothard tunnel; but its construction is said to be surrounded with much more favorable physical conditions than either of these. The length of the projected Simplon tunnel will be 18½ kilometers (11.47 miles), as compared with 15 kilometers for the St. Gothard and 12 kilometers for the Mont Cenis tunnel.

BREADSTUFFS PRODUCTION.

The American newspapers contain a detailed estimate of the probable production of wheat in the United States, and what may be required by Europe. Taking all the States, the yield is expected to be 441,300,000 bushels, of which 170,000,000 bushels will be available for export, or 113,000,000 less than the estimated quantity required by foreign countries, set down as follows:—

	Bushels.
British Islands	136,000,000
France and dependencies	80,000,000
Germany and North Sea ports	20,000,000
Holland and Belgium	10,000,000
Spain and Portugal	15,000,000
Italy and Mediterranean ports	15,000,000
South America and West Indies (mainly flour)	6,000,000
China, flour	1,000,000
Total	283,000,000

It is further claimed that Russia, from her most favorable crop of wheat, exports something over 70,000,000 *bushels, and should the shortage on this year's crop be* only 20 per cent., instead of 28 per cent., as estimated, her surplus for export will be simply nil, but allowing the *damage to be over-estimated, and that Russia can furnish,* say 20,000,000 bushels, the following figures result after *making the largest approximate estimate for supplies from the remainder of the wheat-producing countries of the* globe:—

	Bushels.
Russia	20,000,000
India	10,000,000
Australia	12,000,000
Chili	3,000,000
Canada	6,000,000
Total	51,000,000

A party of German tourists recently made the ascent of the Gross Glockner in a blaze of glory. They left the Studihutte together at 2 o'clock in the morning, with a storm apparently threatening from the west. At 3 a.m. they found themselves in the middle of the storm-cloud, and were compelled by the Egyptian darkness surrounding *them to come to a complete halt. Suddenly the storm* broke out directly above their heads, the thunder and lightning being at once awful and grand. To the six persons of whom this party consisted all Nature seemed to be *the scene of one vast conflagration, and they were prepared* for the worst. For some time their lives did not appear worth half a minute's purchase. Moreover, every one temporarily suffered from complete blindness, owing to the overpowering intensity of the electrical display. At length a strange phenomenon presented itself to their sight. *Each of the six persons appeared enveloped in all* the brilliancy of St. Elmo's fire. From the hair of their heads and beards, from their coats and hats, a stream of electric sparks *was discharging itself. The cords with* which their hats had, on account of the violence of the storm, been fastened to their coat buttons, gave out light, while from the alpenstocks *which they had stuck in the* snow the electric fluid streamed out. Notwithstanding the eminent danger to which they had been exposed, none of the gentlemen were *in the least injured, the only in*convenience they suffered being that they were compelled by the rain, snow and frost to return that morning to the Studihutte *and defer the ascent to a later hour of the day.*

THE TRYPOGRAPH.—A new instrument for multiplying copies of letters, etc., *has been introduced into England* under the name of the Trypograph. It seems a modification of Edison's electric pen. A sheet of special paper is placed on a perforating *tablet, and the writing is done with* a firm hand and a steel pointed stylus. This has the effect of piercing the paper with a number of very minute per*forations, through which it is possible to force ink on to* the sheet of paper placed beneath. The making of the stencil is the most important part of the operations. A *little practice will show the proper amount of pressure to* put upon the stylus and the easiest way of writing; and this once accomplished, it will be understood that the *number of copies is limited only by the duration of the* stencils, which can be stored away for future use, and brought out as required. No press is needed; all that is *wanted is something with a flat surface, the means of* holding the stencil firmly, and a squeegee for scraping the ink over the surface.

THE PACIFIC OCEAN CABLE.—The long talked of project of a submarine telegraph from some point on the west *coast of the United States to the Sandwich Islands, and* thence to China and Japan, is being quietly worked into shape; Mr. Cyrus W. Field, the father of ocean telegraphs, *being the chief promoter of the undertaking. The fact* that he holds an exclusive concession for such a cable from the government of the Sandwich Islands, was brought *out at the recent celebration of the twenty-fifth anniver*sary of the organization of the first Atlantic cable company. Similar concessions are anticipated from the governments *of China and Japan, when the work will no doubt be* undertaken. The laying of a Pacific cable would complete the telegraphic circuit of the world, and its accomplishment *is only a question of time.*