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EXTREMES IN BANKING. SO frequently—according to the New York press—have the National City Bank and the National Bank of Commerce been on the very eve of consolidation, that the rumour has come to be regarded as somewhat of the “hardy perennial” sort. But some such amalgamation is only in line with tendencies prevailing under the banking system of our neighbours. Its completion would mean the establishment of a bank with a combined capital and surplus of some \$100,000,000 and deposits of nearly \$500,000,000, over one-third of the entire deposits held by the forty-five or more clearing house banks of New York. As the capital and rest accounts of the Bank of England are together under \$80,000,000, New York would be able to boast that it possessed, in one respect, the world’s largest bank—though in point of aggregate assets, over a half dozen of European central banks would outrank it.

Such consolidation would afford the interesting extremes, of the most largely and the most meagrely capitalised institutions existing under the same banking system. The scantiness of resources and shortness of time necessary for the founding of national and state banks are the surprise of all who study, for the first time, anything of banking conditions in the United States.

OBTAINING A CHARTER.

IN Canada, there has of recent months been a growing conviction that it should henceforth be harder rather than easier to obtain a new bank charter. But at its easiest, the securing of a charter in this country has at all times been decidedly more difficult than over the border. And the act of 1900 gave an added impetus to the forming of national banks. That act authorized the

organization of banks with a minimum capital of \$25,000 in places the population of which did not exceed 3,000. When the act was passed there were 3,517 national banks in existence. At the close of January, 1909, there were 6,905. The authorized capital of those going March 14, 1900, was \$616,308,095, while the present capitalization is \$933,020,275. As many as 95 banks have been chartered in a single month since March 14, 1900, and there has been an average of 38 banks a month organized since then.

“EASY COME, EASY GO.”

SINCE the panic of 1907 some thirty-five national banks with liabilities of nearly \$60,000,000 have failed; including state banks, trust companies, etc., there have been more than 250 bank failures, with liabilities aggregating considerably over \$260,000,000. It is not surprising, therefore, that the present Comptroller of the Currency—in his undoubtedly earnest efforts to make more secure the country’s banking system—has addressed himself to the task of scrutinizing more closely all applications for new national bank charters. Formerly, the approval of an application to organize a national bank was regarded as practically assured and irrevocable. Since the policy of greater scrutiny has been adopted, however, the approval of an application to organize a national bank is given “subject to revocation in case all requirements are not satisfied, or it develops that in the opinion of the Comptroller conditions are such as not to warrant the establishment of a bank.” Also the new regulations will involve the sending of a special examiner to the community in which the bank is to be organized, and before the charter is issued his report on the proposed organization will be carefully considered at the office of the Comptroller.