

migration agent, is fraud of the most bare faced type. When it is used by a Government agent it is the duty of the Government employing him to see that the falsehood is promptly contradicted, and the man who has promulgated it taught to bridle his tongue in the future. It may be good policy even for an immigration agent to economise the truth at times, but such clumsy awkward lying as is attributed to this Government agent in Toronto, only furnishes a target at which to hurl ridicule.

VALUABLE OPINIONS.

About the time that annual statements of banks are due from the leading chartered banks of the Dominion, business people are on the tip-toe of expectation, waiting for the addresses of presidents, general managers, and others who are credited with having more than an average share of business knowledge and experience. Indeed it is questionable if the business public secure any adequate return for their previous expectancy when they get the waited for addresses, and this year they have certainly been very poorly rewarded.

At a period in the financial history of Canada like the present, when the representatives of the people must at next session of Parliament grapple with the banking affairs of the Dominion, and arrange them for a term of coming years, it might reasonably be expected that the annual addresses of prominent bank officials would handle that matter and treat of it in a clear and exhaustive manner. It is from such individuals we expect enlightenment upon this subject, and in their annual addresses to their shareholders is where we most naturally look for it. Those who have been looking so this summer have met with disappointment for certain, for on no point that is directly connected with banking have these annual addresses been so barren, and no subject do they more completely shirk. At the Bank of Montreal meeting some weeks ago, neither president nor general manager referred to the subject, although their addresses covered a wide range of affairs. None of the officials of other banks touched upon it, with the exception of Mr. George Hague, general manager of the Merchants' Bank of Canada, and his remarks upon the subject, which will be found elsewhere in these columns, appear to touch only the outside shell, and very lightly too, and not in any way

to handle it in a comprehensive manner. It would seem therefore that this question is likely to be taken up by Parliament at its next session, and handled in free fight fashion, instead of being thoroughly discussed by men competent to do so, and the public, as well as their representatives, thoroughly enlightened upon it, before it is placed in the hands of our legislators for settlement. The subject is one seriously affecting the whole trade interests of the Dominion, and is not one to be rolled into Parliament and made a football perhaps for party rancour to kick hither and thither as caprice and not judgment may dictate.

There is another matter which should have received much more attention than it has in these annual banking addresses, and that is the position our banks hold in connection with the present state of inflated credit in the Dominion. Mr. Hague in his address refers to reckless credit and has a word of rebuke for the wholesale merchants who encourage it. If he would scrutinize closely the actions of such officials as himself he might find more cause for rebuke. The business of Canadian banks is made up mainly from the discount business of wholesalers and manufacturers, who are giving to their customers credits too extended to be in keeping with safe and healthy business. This is a matter in which the banks hold the lines in their hands, and if they would only pull them in the direction of shortening mercantile credits, they would do a great work for the safety and stability of Canadian trade affairs. It may be, however, that the keen competition so much spoken of in banking addresses is too great an obstacle to such a movement to be overcome. In fact it may be, and probably is the case, that our bankers, who are so ready to lecture mercantile men on the granting of too liberal credit, find themselves compelled under the present state of banking competition to err somewhat in that way themselves, and by so erring lend encouragement to the practices they are so ready to condemn.

We have only referred to two subjects which our bank dignitaries might have given more prominence in their annual effusions, but there are others like these on which thought and pains expended would have been of more value to the business community of the Dominion generally, than many of the wearisome digests on other matters of commerce in which many mercantile men are better posted than bankers can possibly be.

THE LATE HON. JOHN NORQUAY.

The announcement of the death of the Hon. John Norquay, which took place on Friday night last, was a great surprise to all classes in Manitoba, and to none more so than the personal friends of the honorable gentleman. Scarcely any person outside of his own family knew of the illness which had seized him one day before his death, and which he and his family did not consider sufficiently serious to necessitate the calling in of medical aid until some nine hours before his end, when efforts to save his life were unavailing, and he died in great pain about half past nine o'clock on Friday night.

Mr. Norquay was born in the Red River settlement on May 8th, 1841, so that he has passed away at the prime of life, and at a time when there seemed to be a long career of usefulness still before him. His death, too, removes the last native-born representative from the Local Legislature, in which he has held a seat since its first session in the year 1870. He held a portfolio in the first Provincial Government, formed in the winter of 1871, and in 1878 he was called to take the position of Premier of the province, which he held until near the close of 1887, when he retired to make room for the short-lived Government of Dr. Harrison. Since the defeat of his party, Mr. Norquay has been leader of the Opposition in the Local House.

Mr. Norquay's public career furnishes a fair sample of that of the average pioneer politician, except in the fact that he was lacking in the selfishness to make his official labors profitable in a pecuniary sense. He was a man of much more than ordinary ability, and had a wonderful power of making personal friends though lacking in the power of controlling them for political ends. To this latter defect, if it can be so called, was attributable in a great measure his fall from power in 1887, as he fell more in consequence of the faults of his friends than for his own. Public men cannot avoid making personal enemies, but in this respect Mr. Norquay was fortunate, as after his fall from power he found the number of these very limited. He has passed away without leaving any great legislative work as a monument of his public services, but he will live in the hearts of the present generation of Manitobans, who now feel deeply the loss of "Old John" as he was familiarly called.