

people of Canada in the various institutions that have undertaken the charge of their money. Yet all this by no means evinces a stagnant condition of business, for it is well known and in plain evidence in all parts of the country that business is in an active and vigorous condition. And the Banking Return confirms this general impression, as it shows an increase during the month of no less than \$4,000,000 in the ordinary loans and discounts of the banks, these discounts being almost wholly to the mercantile community. Yet these discounts might and would have been considerably larger had the prices of grain been more to the satisfaction of the farmer. The quantity of grain brought to market in Manitoba alone is immensely less than it was a year ago, this diminution really leading to a considerably less volume of loans by the banks doing business in the North-West. For practically the whole of the crop of Manitoba and the adjoining Territories is handled by means of bank advances. In fact this statement might be made with regard to almost all movements of merchandise in the country, whether exports or imports. While there is a certain proportion of the stocks of merchandise in the country that is brought in or sent out or distributed through the country without bank advances, the same being handled by firms of large and sufficient capital, it is only a small fraction of the whole. By far the larger part of the whole movements of merchandise in the country is represented in the total of bank discounts. On comparing the total of ordinary discounts of last year with the figures of the present we find an increase of no less than \$23,000,000, or about eleven per cent.; and this in the course of a single twelvemonths.

Now, the expansion of bank deposits for the same time was \$25,000,000, which is exactly the same percentage as the increase in discounts. It is clear, therefore, that the increase in mercantile activities has fully kept pace with the increase in deposits, which leads to the further conclusion that the deposits are not lying stagnant in the banks, but that as they are received with one hand from the economical classes who save, they are dispensed with the other to the enterprising classes who employ.

Nothing could be more satisfactory than this, for it is an indication of a healthy equilibrium of things, viz: that while there is an active demand for money for business purposes, there is no undue demand; no fever of speculation; no rash venturing out beyond the limits of reason and prudence; but a quiet and steady pursuing of lines of enterprise that open out from day to day.

There does need, however to be sounded one little note of warning. The imports of the country show a tendency to increase somewhat unduly, for exports are not increasing, which is the best possible reason for keeping imports within bounds and not allowing stocks of merchandise to increase. But one of the most satisfactory features of the present position is the continued decrease in insolvencies, a fact which, as we have pointed out, is beneficial in two ways. In the first place the number of men who are continuing in business, and who may be considered to be reasonably prosperous and to be both buyers and consumers, is augmented, which of course keeps the volume of business up to a higher level.

In the next place wholesale business houses make a larger net return from the transactions of the year. It is well known that the losses suffered during the last five years have been such, as along with ordinary expenses, to swallow up all the profit on the merchandise handled and sometimes to turn the profit account into a record of loss. The decrease in insolvencies will change all that, and it is already beginning to be said that the great dry goods trade has had on the whole a more satisfactory year than has been the case for a long time back.

But we are still in uncertainty as to what may be the final outcome of the commission at Washington. Something surely will be accomplished after all the labor that has been bestowed upon it. The great difficulty seems to be to avoid stipulations and arrangements which will neutralize the good of other arrangements and stipulations. In certain lines of things there can be no doubt that mutual exchange would be beneficial on both sides, but there are others where doubtful questions arise, and dangerous ground is entered upon. If this last is avoided and the first thoroughly followed up in all its ramifications both small and great, a lasting service will be done to both countries. We append our usual statement.

ABSTRACT OF BANK RETURNS.

30th November, 1897.

[In thousands.]

Description.	Banks in Quebec.	Banks in Ontario.	Banks in the other Prov's.	Total.
Capital paid up	35,307	17,334	9,647	62,288
Circulation	19,746	14,059	6,339	40,144
Deposits	112,428	85,311	32,014	229,753
Loans, Discounts and Investments	117,132	88,634	38,268	244,034
Cash, Foreign Balances (Net), and Call Loans	58,379	34,919	12,326	105,624
Legals	8,592	5,652	3,193	17,437
Specie	4,169	2,856	1,732	8,757
Call Loans	7,053	9,870	2,007	18,930
Investments	9,475	18,957	5,007	33,439

30th November, 1898.

[In thousands.]

Description.	Banks in Quebec.	Banks in Ontario.	Banks in the other Prov's.	Total.
Capital paid up	36,033	17,488	9,649	63,170
Circulation	21,295	14,381	6,674	42,350
Deposits	120,200	98,287	36,086	254,573
Loans, Discounts and Investments	129,402	102,692	41,348	273,442
Cash, Foreign Balances (Net), and Call Loans	54,917	34,383	13,979	103,279
Legals	8,282	5,692	3,352	17,326
Specie	4,034	3,071	1,981	9,086
Call Loans	8,888	13,274	2,801	24,963
Investments	10,186	24,423	4,843	39,452

Government Savings Banks

Montreal City and District Savings Bank

La Caisse d'Economie, Quebec....

Loan Companies, 1897

Bank Deposits

Total deposits of all kinds ..

GOVERNMENT CIRCULATION.

Small

Large

Gold held, \$13,336,508 = 54.11 per cent.

STORE WINDOWS.

Do not neglect your shop windows. Keep the glass clean and the frames and casings free from dust and spider webs. Then take pains to put something inviting inside them, for the people outside to look in at. It is natural for the average man, woman or youngster to look in at shop windows. The show window is a magnet, and "draws the wondering eye"—if it is bright and attractive. But it will not draw, but more likely repel, if allowed to become dirty and the goods in it fly-blown, faded or dusty.

It is worth while for the retailer in country places to remember that the owners of city stores spend thousands of dollars to arrange windows suitable for display. And they find it to pay them. As the Bulletin of Minneapolis says, the country retailer who now neglects this part of his daily work should realize its importance in trade and proceed at once to adopt window dressing as a part of his daily work. There are many window displays in country stores that would do genuine credit to city stores. They are inviting, and glimpses of the well arranged store room within appeal to the passer-by. Let the retailers in the smaller places take more pains with this feature of their stores, and we venture to say they will find it well worth their trouble.