the evil results of this lack of elasticity. For three months the metropolitan banks are subject to a demand from the interior banks for thirty to forty millions of currency. The cash has to be furnished, for the most part, in the form of lawful money; and the consequence is a reduction in the legal reserves which creates stringency, artificially advances the rate of interest, and compels a violent contraction of loans, with injury to all interests proportioned to the wants and necessities of borrowers. All this disturbance is susceptible of easy remedy, provided the banks be permitted to issue their notes upon convenient and remunerative conditions. The Fall wants of the West and South could then be satisfied by notes put out for the emergency; the lawful money reserves would remain undisturbed; the rate of interest would continue steady; and these periodic convulsions would be avoided.

The necessity for remedying this greatest of all the defects in our currency system is all the more imperative because it is very properly proposed to withdraw the legal tender notes into the Treasury; which, by diminishing the reserve resources of the banks, will most seriously intensify these Fall derangements and make it impossible for the banks to maintain their reserves within the legal minimum. The investing of the bank circulation with a large scope of elasticity is an absolutely indispensable corollary of withdrawing the legal tenders. Without that protection, the plan for impounding the Government notes must soon prove a failure; and, too probably that failure would prove to be the end and indefinite postponement of Currency Reform; for the mistake would create a revulsion against the sound money policy and possibly place the country at the mercy of a fanatical inflationism.

## CANADIAN BANK CLEARINGS.

(000 omitted)

| | Montreal | | Toronto | | Halifax | | Hamilton | | Winnipeg | | St. John | | Vancouver | Victoria |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1897-8 | 1898-9 | 1897-8 | 1898-9 | 1897-8 | 1898-9 | 1897-8 | 1898-9 | 1897-8 | 1898-9 | 1897-8 | 1898-9 | 1898-9 | 1898-9 |
| | $ | $ | $ | $ | $ | $ | $ | $ | $ | $ | $ | $ | $ | |
| September | 55,080 | 61,856 | 32,466 | 33,932 | 5,164 | 4,919 | 2,971 | 2,773 | 8,035 | 6,414 | 2,620 | 2,508 | | |
| October | 59,340 | 66,354 | 35,736 | 38,349 | 5,817 | 5,408 | 2,970 | 3,103 | 13,291 | 9,347 | 2,498 | 2,498 | 2,518 | |
| November | 59,166 | 67,246 | 34,211 | 39,125 | 5,580 | 5,154 | 2,878 | 3,147 | 13,550 | 11,553 | 2,660 | 2,660 | 2,838 | 2,663 |
| December | 56,509 | 69,143 | 35,986 | 43,508 | 5,386 | 5,838 | 3,094 | 3,334 | 9,784 | 10,708 | 2,738 | 2,746 | 3,058 | 2,433 |
| January | 60,334 | 64,850 | 37,836 | 42,388 | 5,009 | 5,913 | 3,028 | 3,274 | 6,347 | 7,683 | 2,417 | 2,470 | 2,441 | 2,544 |
| February | 62,332 | 62,432 | 33,414 | 40,818 | 4,446 | 4,583 | 2,663 | 2,807 | 5,517 | 6,209 | 2,022 | 2,212 | 2,099 | 2,849 |
| March | 62,943 | 69,610 | 39,012 | 40,646 | * 5,285 | 4,838 | 3,021 | 3,122 | 5,968 | 6,756 | 2,148 | 2,391 | 2,818 | 2,689 |
| April | 50,003 | 61,249 | 33,035 | 39,182 | 4,472 | 5,209 | 2,858 | 3,304 | 6,240 | 6,916 | 2,254 | 2,494 | 3,024 | 2,848 |
| May | 56,475 | 71,777 | 34,374 | 44,349 | 4,798 | 5,602 | 2,932 | 3,513 | 8,683 | 7,472 | 2,513 | 2,910 | 2,784 | 2,700 |
| June | 59,471 | 63,756 | 36,960 | 41,189 | 4,997 | 5,461 | 3,001 | 3,224 | 7,397 | 8,211 | 2,592 | 2,606 | 3,768 | 2,509 |
| July | 60,423 | 63,209 | 35,727 | 40,569 | 5,851 | 4,742 | 3,117 | 3,304 | 6,316 | 8,169 | 2,927 | 2,753 | 3,355 | 3,087 |
| August | 55,578 | 63,115 | 32,390 | 37,207 | 5,551 | 7,823 | 2,655 | 3,138 | 6,180 | 7,995 | 2,059 | 3,103 | 4,929 | 3,039 |
| | 696,754 | 784,597 | 421,147 | 481,262 | 62,356 | 65,490 | 35,188 | 38,043 | 97,308 | 97,433 | 29,448 | 31,351 | 33,632 | 27,361 |

* Figures for October not furnished.

## THE OPPORTUNITY AND THE RESPONSIBILITY.

Above is the title of the paper read by President Woodworth of the National Association of Local Fire Insurance Agents at the annual gathering of the North West Association at Chicago last week. The address is said to have been listened to with close attention, its chief points were received with much applause, and at the conclusion of his reading Mr. Woodworth was honored by a rising vote of thanks, and was applauded for several minutes. The paper is well worthy of the space given thereto by the American insurance journals, and we have pleasure in reproducing it in full:

When honored with an invitation to present a paper at this meeting it was suggested that I discuss the object of the National Association of Local Fire Insurance Agents. My first thought was that so much had been said along this line that anything further would be unnecessary and tiresome. In fact our friends of the press and the managers and field men have been so complimentary that our hats would be much too small if we did not understand that their friendship and good will make them oblivious of our weaknesses and limitations. Second thought and the advice of others have decided me to say a few words regarding our association and its work.

The object of the association, as stated in its constitution, is: "To support right principles and to oppose bad practices in fire underwriting." Along these two lines it is the purpose of the association to proceed cautiously and persistently and to act without fear or favor. The intent is to add the weight of the association to that of yours and other underwriting organizations in opposing the evils found in the transaction of fire insurance business, and in advocating the reforms which are generally approved by all classes engaged in the business. Assured of the support of the managers and field men, we have already proceeded against two great evils. The measure of success attending the crusade against overhead writing need not be referred to except to call attention to the fact that the corrected list of companies which say they will not indulge in this pernicious practice, which was issued July 31, was only a copy of an enactment of the companies against overhead writing. The supreme test is in the enforcement of this law, and to that task local agents must devote themselves. In performing this duty we sincerely desire the assistance