

States. Competition had, however, run riot in many quarters, and it was time for a check to be put upon it.

Legitimate competition is the life of trade. When carried beyond that it is its bane. Bankers have it in their power to do something to remedy many of the things now complained of. Long credit manifests itself in long bills offered for discount, unreasonable amounts offered on the names of weak traders, and borrowing from banks by importers without security at all. These things are within the power of bankers to remedy.

Of business in the Northwest I have only a word or two to say. The crop of last year was heavy in amount and surpassed expectations; but much of it was injured to some extent before being gathered in, and the value of the whole was considerably less than was at one time hoped. Still the result was an average one, and the development of mixed farming is proceeding very satisfactorily there also. The reports of the practical farmers who visited the country last year, which have been published in this country, are conclusive as to the value of the farming lands both of the Northwest and other parts of Canada. I have never read anything more practical. I could recommend that every one who is interested in Canada should read these reports carefully. They can hardly fail to produce a strong impression in Great Britain. One of these farmers sums up his opinion of the matter by saying that if he were not so tied to his position in England, he would close up his affairs and come and farm in Canada.

M'KINLEY TARIFF.

There are some certainties and some uncertainties respecting the operation of this act. What is certain is that it stimulated our export of barley last fall at an increased price. It is certain also that barley has generally maintained an average price since, and that eggs fetch nearly as much this year as they did last. What is uncertain is whether consumers in the United States will not after all pay the increased duties imposed on Canadian farm products. I am inclined to think they will. But if not, I am inclined to think that if one market closes another can be opened, and that if our farmers cannot profitably grow one kind of grain they can another. I do not think the export of hay from this province in such large quantities has been an unmixed benefit by any means. With intelligence and self-reliance, the farmers of Canada can meet any tariff disadvantages of this kind, if they will bestir themselves to do it.

FORECASTING THE FUTURE.

Those who have paid attention to former utterances of mine on these occasions will have found little of prophesying or forecasting about them. On the contrary, some years ago, I gave expression to some serious warnings on this subject. I will take the liberty of repeating what I said then, and it is just as pertinent now:—

"The habit of looking out for the future and basing commercial ventures upon it is a bad one. It has deceived many to their ruin. Forecasts of the future in nine cases out of ten are falsified by the event. Whether it is the condition of the coming harvest, or the future of grain or cotton, or the supposed exigencies of foreign markets, the man who ventures on commercial operations upon such forecasts in the majority of cases will be disappointed. If he risks his own money in the venture and loses it, he does no harm to anyone but himself, but if he carries on the venture on borrowed money, he runs the risk of losing the money of his banker or his creditors. This he has no right to do, for as he did not mean them to share the profits of his venture they ought not to be called on to share the loss."

I said further: "If persons in business will keep themselves wide awake as to the present, they need not trouble themselves about the future. A person can always tell whether the demand for his goods is brisk or dull, whether it is continuous or fitful, and can guide himself accordingly. Laying up large stocks of goods, or increasing manufactured products in view of a possible demand some months ahead, is not sound trading but speculating. In former times of long winters and slow voyages, risks had to be taken which are not necessary now. The cable, the telegraph, the railway, the ocean steamer, have done away with the necessity of risking anything on an unknown future. I repeat

"then, it is not well to be always forecasting. It is as foolish as it is dangerous. Market prophets are as unreliable as weather prophets."

Such were the conclusions of more than twenty years' experience in the year 1886. I can hardly do better than repeat them in 1891.

I need say nothing about the position and credit of the bank; that is well understood, and we shall endeavor to maintain it; nor need I say anything more about competition, except that we shall do our best to meet it; nor about our discounting customers and borrowers except to hope that they will be prudent as well as enterprising, so as to keep out of trouble. I hope nothing will happen this year to prevent our giving a good account of the operations of the bank in the year 1892, and that if we live long enough to meet you again we may have a satisfactory report to present.

And, as men are concerned just now about the position of the country, I may say that it is thirty-five years since I first entered a Canadian bank. Thirty-five years is not a long time in the history of a country, but during this short period I have seen the deposits of Canada grow from fifteen millions to two hundred and twenty millions. This fact speaks volumes. In view of such a result in so short a time, one would be pessimistic, indeed, to have any doubts about the future.

After some enquiries from Mr. John Morrison and Mr. John Crawford, which were answered by the general manager, resolutions of thanks to the president, vice-president, and directors and to the general manager were passed.

Scrutineers having been appointed in the persons of Messrs. T. C. Lyman and Mr. James Williamson, these gentlemen shortly afterwards reported the following gentlemen to be duly elected as directors:—Andrew Allan, Robert Anderson, H. Montagu Allan, John Cassils, James P. Dawes, John Duncan, T. H. Dunn, Jonathan Hodgson, Hector Mackenzie.

The new board met in the afternoon, when Mr. Andrew Allan was re-elected president, and Mr. Robert Anderson, vice-president.

BANK OF TORONTO.

The annual meeting of shareholders in the Bank of Toronto was held on Wednesday, 17th June, 1891, at the banking house of the institution on Wellington street, in this city.

On motion, George Gooderham, Esq., was called to the chair, and Mr. Coulson was requested to act as secretary.

Messrs. Walter S. Lee and T. G. Blackstock were appointed scrutineers.

By request of the chairman the secretary read the following

REPORT.

The directors of the Bank of Toronto beg to present to the stockholders the thirty-fifth annual report of the bank's affairs.

Notwithstanding the feeling of uncertainty that prevailed so widely, and the unfavorable conditions under which many branches of business have been suffering during the past year, your directors have pleasure in reporting that the net profits of the year have been maintained.

STATEMENT OF THE RESULT OF THE BUSINESS OF THE BANK FOR THE YEAR.

The net profits for the year, after making full provision for all losses and deducting expenses, interest accrued on deposits and rebate on current discounts, amount to the sum of..... 282,449 94
The balance at credit of Profit and Loss on 31st May, 1890, was....\$ 23,808 67

\$306,258 61
This sum has been appropriated as follows:—

Dividend No. 65, five per cent.....\$100,000 00
Dividend No. 70, five per cent..... 100,000 00

200,000 00
Added to Rest account 100,000 00
Carried forward to next year 6,258 61

106,258 61
\$306,258 61

The addition to the Rest thus reported makes his fund amount to \$1,600,000.

The directors desire to avail themselves of the provisions of the Banking Act authorizing the formation of an Officers' Guarantee Fund. A resolution will be submitted for your approval authorizing them to establish this fund and to contribute thereto out of the funds of the bank.

A branch of the bank has been opened in the town of Brookville under favorable auspices.

The directors cannot close this report without referring to the loss the bank has sustained in the decease of their late colleague, W. R. Wadsworth, Esq. Mr. Wadsworth was one of the charter members of the bank, and by his sound judgment and experience at all times rendered it good service.

To fill up the vacancy the directors, acting on the powers conferred upon them, elected John Leys, Esq., of Rice Lewis & Sons (Limited).

The various officers of the bank have fulfilled their duties to the satisfaction of the board.

The whole respectfully submitted.

(Signed) GEORGE GOODERHAM.
President.

GENERAL STATEMENT, 30TH MAY, 1891.

Liabilities.

Notes in circulation.	\$1,394,219 00
Deposits bearing interest.....	\$5,634,350 80
Deposits not bearing interest.....	1,563,219 22
	7,197,570 02
Balances due to other banks....	123,689 76
Unclaimed divid'nds	120 00
Half yearly divid'nd payable 1st June, 1891.....	100,000 00
	100,120 00
Total liabilities to the public...	\$8,815,598 78
Capital paid up....	\$2,000,000 00
Rest.....	1,600,000 00
Interest accrued on deposit receipts...	47,235 00
Rebate on notes discounted.....	86,553 00
Balance of profit and loss account carried forward.....	6,258 61
	3,740,046 61
	\$12,555,645 39

Assets.

Gold and silver coin on hand ..	\$333,493 89
Dominion notes on hand	749,432 00
Notes and cheques of other banks..	213,077 95
Balances due from other banks in Canada.....	72,571 83
Balances due from agents of the bank in Great Britain.....	273,757 49
Balances due from agents of the bank in the United States..	281,663 63
Municipal debentures	82,532 66
Total assets immediately available	\$ 2,006,529 45
Loans and bills discounted	\$10,416,911 09
Overdue debts, (estimated loss provided for) ..	5,207 44
Real estate other than bank premises	6,997 41
	10,429,115 94
Bank premises	120,000 00
	\$12,555,645 39

(Signed) D. COULSON,
Cashier.

Toronto, May 30th, 1891.

After the reading of the above the president, Geo. Gooderham, Esq., addressed the meeting, and a resolution to adopt the above report was carried.

On motion of Walter S. Lee, Esq., seconded by Henry Gooderham, Esq., the directors were authorized to establish a guarantee fund for the officers and employees of the Bank of