

after the Baring crisis. During the dull years that followed, European investors became as timid as they had previously been bold; and sought security above all things. Yet, even now, a thin stream of British deposits amounting to about three millions for the year was trickling into Victoria.

Early in 1892 the 'peak' of British investment for the period under review was reached. At this time nearly 40 millions had been obtained in Great Britain, while deposits obtained in Australia totalled 99½ millions. It is important to notice the very great variation in overseas liability in the different institutions, and the following table is of more than passing interest in the light of the subsequent history of the banks specified. The important fact should here be noted that the greater part of the British deposits were for such short terms that effective utilization of them was almost an impossibility.

TABLE VII

*Percentage of total deposits obtained in Britain*

For eleven banks operating in Australia.

	<i>Per cent.</i>
Queensland National . . . . .	51.8
London Chartered . . . . .	50.0
Commercial of Australia . . . . .	47.0
Australian Joint Stock . . . . .	37.0
New Zealand . . . . .	32.0
Union of Australia . . . . .	28.5
Bank of Australasia . . . . .	20.0
National of Australasia . . . . .	18.0
E. S. & A. . . . .	16.0
New South Wales . . . . .	10.0
Commercial of Sydney . . . . .	4.34

These figures have a very material bearing upon the events of the next few months, and confirm the impression that, while the British investor had first called attention to the financial position and had thereby generated the fatal suspicion that all was far from well, it was the importunity of the Australian depositor which hurried the crisis on to collapse.

The early months of 1892 were marked by a continuous succession of failures in which both the land-banks and mercantile firms figured. The failure of the Mercantile Land and Finance Company in March of that year, with nearly two millions of liabilities, marks a definite stage in the crisis. This concern