speaker thinks it a grievance that a duke should have been richer than his father.

All this and a great deal more to the same effect was proclaimed by the Internationals before Henry George was known as an advocate of the confiscation of land rents. Whether he borrowed from these Socialists or not is of no consequence. If he borowed from them, he did so as eclectically; he took what suited him and left the rest, going on the principle that one thing at a time is enough. The Internationals are at least logical. They do not pretend that one form of property can be stolen and another left; and the sooner the Toronto clergymen who patronize Henry George become convinced of this fact the better. Nothing is more frequent than delusions on such a point as this. Frederick of Prussia was a conspicuous patron of the French philosophers till a vision of falling thrones passed before his eyes on perusing Baron d'Holbach's *System of Nature*, in which everything hitherto held sacred was assailed; and even Voltaire himself tried to back water when he saw in the distance the coming storm which he had done his share to raise. But, as always happens in such cases, it was too late. Let the Toronto clergymen take these examples to heart and cease to indulge in the dangerous pastime of countenanc ng an avowed confiscation of landed property, in the vain hope that this enterprise could be accomplished without danger of the fruitful example spreading to other forms of property.

Let us for a moment consider what the confiscation of land rents means. All the rents of mortgaged lands are pledged to the mortgagee, and much of them paid to him under the name of interest. The land is conveyed to him in security for the loan, and the mortgagor retains the right to redeem. Thus the confiscation of rent would in fact be the confiscation of interest and of the capital of the loan as well, for the rent is the whole annual value of the land, and when that is gone there is nothing left out of which interest could be met or capital repaid. All the creditors of the land owner not secured by mortgage would suffer equally with the mortgagee. The confiscation of rent, intended to strike the land owner, would ruin all who had financial relations with him. And the tax would soon be divided by the partners in the proprietorship, the mortgagees. "It will only be necessary," says the Montreal *Witness*, "to levy on the mortgagee his share of the tax to make a large part of the farmers comparatively indifferent to the land tax."

The programme of the International, of which Henry Georgism is the presentation of one item, the others being kept back for the time, is a social revolution. The ground it takes is that the French revolution of 1789 merely wiped out the privileges of the aristocracy, while it left those of the bourgeoisie, capitalists and traders, intact. These latter alleged privileges are now the object of attack. Of the French revolution the *Internationale* says: "It destroyed the aristocracy of nobles and put the bourgeoisie in its place," and adds that "the domination of the bourgeoisie is the slavery of the proletariat." Therefore, says the *Progres du Locle*, "*nous sommes revolutionaires.*" Let all who are disposed to amuse themselves with the confiscation of rent theory, clergymen as well as others, pause before some of their dupes get their necks entangled in the fatal noose.

MERCHANTS AND THEIR CUSTOMERS.

A month ago or more we referred, in describing a meeting of wholesale merchants in Winnipeg, to the action of those present at that meeting in agreeing to form a jobbers' union, which should take steps to lessen losses by seeing that their customers carried adequate insurance against fire, that they kept decent books, and that they took stock regularly, &c. The matter has created interest in Montreal, and on Wednesday last a meeting of wholesale merchants interested in business in Manitoba and the North-West was held in that city to consider what steps could be taken to further the objects which we have mentioned. Mr. Cleghorn, President of the Board of Trade, Messrs. R. L. Gault, John A. Robertson, George Lightbourn, Hollis Shorey, Charles Martin, and representatives of Gillespie, Robertson & Co., Thibaudeau Bros., J. L. Cassidy and other houses were present.

The meeting was addressed by Mr. S. A. D. Bertrand, whose name has been associated with the movement, and who came from Winnipeg to address the gathering. After hearing his views the gentlemen present agreed upon the necessity of employing an agent to visit all retail firms in the country concerned. It is considered likely that the appointment of such an agent will be made at an early day. The main object of such an association is to get retailers to carry a reasonable proportion of insurance on their stocks, and this is a matter of great and general importance. There are various other directions, however, in which a good man or a corps of good men might assist to educate merchants in town and country in commercial ethics and procedure. We shall be glad to see something definite come of the gatherings already made with so proper an object in view.

SHORTER CREDITS.

We are accustomed to hear much of the satisfactory basis of short terms upon which business is done in the United States. And we have often listened with interest to accounts of how well credit matters were managed across the Line 45°. There are exceptions, however, to this pleasing condition of things. Merchants there as here are disposed to overtrade. The American *Wool Reporter* tells the following story:

"This is an era of long terms, when goods are sold on six to nine months' time. This is notably true of men's wear—the great bulk of suiting goods being sold within the above defined limits, and on certain lines of overcoatings the extreme limit being given. It seems more than ever essential that selling agents should have a bureau of credits especially and exclusively devoted to their interests. The woollen-selling interests are behind other trades in this direction; they continue to depend for information regarding the financial ability of their customers upon the mercantile agencies."

That journal goes on to censure that particular trade for depending so much upon mercantile agencies and for selling so freely on credit. In fact the whole paragraph might have been addressed to Canadian instead of American dealers in woollens. It is much to be desired that our merchants would make some move in the direction indicated.

THE DANGERS OF ELECTRIC LIGHTING.

Electric lighting is amongst us, and to remain. It can be made perfectly safe, but as at present conducted it is full of danger. We purpose to present some facts and considerations connected with the subject which demand attention from every business man, from underwriters most of all. During the past two months, proofs of the danger we allege, corresponding to the steadily extending area of electric lighting in Canada, have been furnished almost day by day.

On Oct. 11th, 1889, an electric light wire crossed the C.P.R. telegraph line at the Welland House, St. Catharines, and destroyed the magnets, the house narrowly escaping destruction by fire.

Two weeks later the instruments in the telegraph offices at Trenton and Colborne were melted by contact with an electric light wire, the contact probably made at Trenton.

Early in November the Bell Telephone annunciator at Windsor was burned by the crossing of its wires with that of an electric light wire, and to save the building the wires had to be cut.

On November 13th, the G. N. W. Telegraph instruments were destroyed and other damage done at Walkerton, "through downright neglect and careless construction on the part of an electric light concern."

Some weeks ago the telegraph relays at Yorkville and at Aurora were burned out and the Aurora office set fire to by reason of an electric light contact made thirty miles away. Fortunately the burning was discovered at 9 p.m., or the lives of the operator and his family might have been lost, and his house and contents destroyed.

The Toronto *Telegram* of November 20th has the following item:—"Miss Leigh, a telephone operator living on Cumberland street, was severely burned through the telephone and electric light wires fouling each other."

The *World* of same date tells of the removal to his home in an ambulance of Fred. Reed, a lineman employed by the telephone company at their North Toronto branch, by reason of an electric shock received in endeavoring to rectify a contact between that company's lines and an electric wire.

In the *Globe* of 21st instant we find an account of a fire caused at Dixon's photograph gallery on Yonge street by a swaying wire striking the woodwork. And in the same journal, we are told that on Tuesday