

THE TRADER.

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SPECIAL NOTICE.

To ensure insertion, changes or new advertisements must be sent to the office not later than the 20th of each month.

Editorial.

DIVIDE FAIRLY.

In the discussion on Mr. Beaty's bill (now before Parliament) for the equitable distribution of Insolvent assets, some of the speakers seem to have gone out of their way to display their ignorance of commercial affairs. As we understand the matter, Mr. Beaty has two bills before Parliament, one for the discharge of insolvents since the repeal of the last Act, and another for the equitable distribution of Insolvent Estates. There is of necessity no connection whatever between these two bills, and it reflects but little credit upon the astuteness of some of the members of our House of Commons, that they could not discuss the latter bill without dragging in that regarding the discharge of Insolvents, and attempting by such outside issues to lead to its defeat. About the fairness of equitable distribution of Insolvent Estates, there can be no doubt whatever, the principle is sound to the core, and will stand the test of time and investigation. The question of Insolvents discharge is one, however, on which men will differ, and we can respect the opinions of those who differ from us conscientiously; but that of "Rateable distribution of Insolvents' assets" is one that all are agreed upon as being right, and therefore should have nothing thrown in its way to prevent its becoming law. We trust that in spite of any and all such quibblers, that the end

of the present session will see it an accomplished fact, and thus relieve trade from an incubus that is weighing upon it, and at the same time do away with the manifold frauds engendered by the present position of this very important matter.

BEWARE OF SMUGGLERS.

We have several times warned our readers of the danger of buying goods from fictitious jobbers of little or no standing or responsibility. Another illustration of the reality of this danger has recently come to light, owing to the seizure, by the Canadian Customs authorities, of the goods and books of one of these "Cheap John jobbers" that are demoralizing the jewelry trade of this country. In regard to this seizure, a contemporary says:

"How an unscrupulous dealer can dodge the Customs' officials, has been shown of late by the operations of a Buffalo firm, King & Easil. Having rented a room at Fort Erie, the contents of which were one safe, they had a traveller on the road in this country taking orders for jewelry. He represented to the trade that the firm had a large factory in Fort Erie, and sold goods duty paid, whereas the orders were filled in Buffalo and the goods entered at Fort Erie only to a limited extent and at low value. Besides this, watch cases and plain gold rings to the extent of \$8000 or \$4000 came into Canada without entry, the past year, and the amount pocketed by the firm at the expense of the importer and the Government during the three years would be fully \$10,000."

From our personal knowledge of the trade of this country, we have no doubt but that all that our esteemed contemporary says in reference to this case is strictly correct, and if the evil stopped with the frauds of this firm, it would be but a slight matter, but unfortunately it does not, for as every one in the trade well knows, they are only one of the many of such unscrupulous jobbers, who not only cheat the Government, but demoralize all honest trade by their fraudulent practices.

We think we are safe in saying that there are at least half a dozen of such rascals in business not more than 100 miles from Toronto, and that the sooner the Government put a detective on their track the better it will be for the jewelry trade generally.

Some of these fellows are well known, and we understand that the regular whole-

sale jewelry houses of this city are about forming themselves into a league for the purpose of furnishing to the Government detectives information that will lead to the detection and conviction of these commercial pirates.

"Informer" is not a position or title that any one covets, and the dislike of the name and occupation has heretofore kept these gentlemen aloof from aiding any of the Government detectives; now, however, that they find their honest trade so seriously interfered with and themselves gradually being supplanted by a lot of scoundrels, they think it time to fight the devil with fire, and if we mistake not, they will make it hot for some of these "gentlemen."

In this step we think they are to be commended and encouraged, and we think that between them and the staff of detectives that the Government are willing to place at their disposal these commercial freebooters should be cleaned out root and branch.

The time for inaction is past, both wholesale and retail trade alike are menaced by disaster if these harpies are allowed to prey upon the trade of this country.

No retailer is safe who buys such goods, for as everyone knows who has kept himself posted by reading THE TRADER, the Customs officials can step into his store any day and seize any goods that have not paid duty, no matter from whom bought.

Extra cheap goods are thus as dangerous to handle as stolen goods, and it is a well known fact that in all cases where goods are seized under circumstances similar to the above quoted instance, the firm's books are carefully looked into, their customers marked, and the contraband goods seized by the Government, no matter in whose keeping they happen to be. That they are honestly paid by the retailer having them in his possession is just so much the worse for him, because if he still owed for them he could refuse payment, but if the money be already paid, his chance of seeing it is a very poor one.

Retailers have the remedy for this sort of thing in their own hands, and it is to refuse to buy goods from other than recognized wholesale houses of standing and character.

Itinerant jobbers and pedlars selling at or below cost should be left severely alone, for merchants may depend upon it