

CUSTOMS' FRAUDS.

The compromising of cases of fraud upon the customs is a grave scandal, and the people should make their voice heard in the matter. Why should the Government do with impunity an act criminal in a citizen. Either a fraud has been committed or it has not. If the latter, the accused should be acquitted; if the former, he should pay the full penalty; not contribute to the customs' revenue a part of that held back fraudulently.

The Wholesale Dry Goods Section of the Toronto Board of Trade has just passed the following resolution:

Resolved, That the wholesale dry goods section of the Board of Trade have heard with much regret that the Government have accepted a compromise in the customs actions against Thoutet, Fitzgibbon & Co., and Fitzgibbon, Schaffentlin & Co. It would appear that the amount claimed against Thoutet, Fitzgibbon & Co., \$23,000, represents only the amount of duties underpaid, of which the Government have cognizance; how much more there was it is hard to say, but taking the duties as averaging one-fourth of the value, this represents \$92,000, value of the goods falsely entered, which but for the limit of time having expired, would be a claim also, making the total amount of penalty which the old firm should have paid, \$115,000. Add to this, \$144,000, claim against the new firm, and we have \$259,000, or over a quarter of a million which should stand against this firm. This section has repeatedly pointed out the injustice of allowing such frauds to go unpunished and unjudged year after year, to the detriment of honest importers, and are of the opinion that no compromise should have been accepted. They have also repeatedly pointed out that such firm, doing principally an import order trade and carrying little stock, have usually little assets which the Government can seize. They therefore consider that seizures should have been put on their importations as they arrived. The trade here carry stocks varying from \$250,000 to \$500,000, which are hostages for their good behavior. We know it is stated that the Government cannot get any more than the amount now accepted. But it is not surely pretended that the Government is in such dire need of funds that it is compelled to accept a compromise of less than ten cents on the dollar, thereby giving these parties release and allowing them to go again, when if the claim were pressed for the full amount they would be forced out of business, and the trade would be relieved of dishonest and unfair competition. The difficulties of proving these frauds, and the expense attending them are well known to the Government, and to accept a settlement which does not represent one-half of the amount of which the revenue is known to have been defrauded is, we consider, a direct encouragement to go on again, for it makes it profitable to commit these frauds if a firm can get off with less than one-half of the amount which it has robbed the revenue of and been found out, how much more was not detected no one can say.

—We congratulate George Reid & Co., Toronto, upon their removal into the fine premises, 11—13 Front street East, Toronto. The warehouse is on the Esplanade at Jarvis street, and the offices and show-rooms in Front street East.

—Exports of ready-made clothing from Germany have fallen off one-half in the last three years. This is attributed to the high tariffs of some countries, but in

the case of Canada it is laid to the British preferential tariff. We find that German exports of ready-made clothing to Canada were in the year ending June, 1898, \$109,834, and for that ending June, 1899, \$121,053. The ready-made clothing imported from Great Britain was, in 1898, \$433,408, and in 1899, \$477,133, and the increase for the first four months of 1900 has been from £77,654 to £107,794.

THE WOOL MARKET.

Toronto—Wool is not coming into the market with much freedom, and the market has been slow. There has been paid here 15 cents for washed and 9½ cents, unwashed. There is still large accumulation of Canadian wool of last season held in Toronto by United States buyers. English wools similar to our own have been selling at 7½d. to 8d.

Montreal.—The market decidedly quiet, stocks very small. Canadian mills are holding back from buying, pending receipt of wholesalers' orders. Prices, steady. Capes, 18 to 22c. Natals, 22 to 25c. B.A., 38 to 45c. No sales of new clip Quebec wool are recorded yet. Next London sales open July 3rd, limit of new arrivals 150,000 bales, already reached.

A sale of sheepskins and wool was held in London, June 14th, and the offerings numbered 3,142 bales. There was an average attendance present, but competition was very unsatisfactory, and resulted in large withdrawals. The result of the sale showed an average decline of 10 per cent., with Australasian merinos selling ½d. to ¾d. and cross-bred ¼d. to ¾d. lower. New Zealand cross-breeds were well competed for at a farthing decline.

COTTON MANUFACTURING IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

The British Consul at Charleston, U.S., reports recently to his Government on this interesting question that cotton manufacturing in the Southern States is steadily growing in importance, most of the mills south being situated within this consular district, in the States of South Carolina, North Carolina and Georgia. The southern mills at this time have 5,000,000 spindles in operation, as compared with 13,000,000 in the New England States of the north. It is not likely, however, that the northern mills will be materially increased, while it is estimated by the best authorities that, from this time on, the southern spindles will increase at the rate of 2,000,000 annually, and as the United States can produce only 2,500,000 spindles a year, it is probable that the southern mills, next year, will absorb almost the entire output. As yet the finer grades of cotton cloths are made in New England and Great Britain, the south having, heretofore, manufactured only the coarser grades. The southern mills, however, are now beginning to turn their attention to this matter, and it is probably only a question of time when they will be seriously competing with the makers of the finer fabrics.

It seems beyond doubt that this country must in future depend largely on the Far East for a market for its surplus manufactured cotton products. Even now a very large amount of cotton goods made in southern mills is shipped to China, Japan, and other Eastern countries, and there seems reasonable ground for the statement that before many years the bulk of the cotton grown in America may be manufactured in the States where it is produced. It is estimated that there are 46,000,000 spindles now engaged in cotton manufacture in Great Britain.