

96, there was an increase of \$9,531,057 in our exports to the United States, and of \$6,815,911 in our exports to Great Britain. If the rate of increase be maintained that has marked the five months of the present year, a considerable gain on these figures may be looked for in 1897-98.

DEFECTS IN THE CREDIT SYSTEM.

The waste arising from a too wide extension of the credit system in trade has made itself felt in the United States, and efforts are being made to correct it. The credit men of that country, by which phrase is meant the supervisors of credit connected with the wholesale houses, have formed an association, with branches in different States or cities. These bodies meet periodically, and the central association has had, as our readers know, several annual meetings at different places. At these gatherings views are exchanged as to the best means of regulating credits and minimizing losses by bad debts, a subject which may well attract the attention of Canadian merchants and manufacturers. More than twenty local branches of the National Association of Credit Men discussed the subject of "fake advertising" in their November meetings.

Methods of counteracting such advertising were discussed, among them the prosecution of those who falsify in their advertisements, or announce to the public the falsity of such advertisers' claims. In some cases the newspapers were asked to refuse to accept such advertising. Other subjects connected with merchandising were discussed, such as "fire sales," "bankruptcy sales," "damaged goods sales," "special bargain sales," etc., and received much consideration at these meetings.

A matter which has not seldom proved troublesome in Canada, and has been discussed in THE MONETARY TIMES, is that of remittance made for small amounts by country merchants to the cities, or *vice versa*, by means of personal cheques, which cheques are subject to a discount of, say, 25 cents each. Profit on trifling transactions is often swallowed up by this discount, and there is no wonder that people cry out against it. The United States association, by its secretary, Mr. F. R. Boocock, sent out in October the following letter: "We are desirous of so agitating as to the best method of making remittances as to bring about a reformation in the use of personal cheques by out-of-town merchants. Will you kindly advise the writer as to the amount it costs you annually in the way of exchange on country cheques? Statistics of this character will be very valuable in correcting this abuse of credit."

The replies to this circular indicate that very many merchants suffer from this abuse and want it stopped. Houses in New York, Chicago, St. Louis and elsewhere are agitating the matter. It has long been the custom for a local merchant to pay bills with his personal cheques. Wholesalers are obliged to pay collection charges on these from 2 to 2½ per cent. On small sums the charge is very heavy. New York banks are not so strict about the collection as are smaller banks elsewhere, particularly at the South. It is proposed to address the New York Clearing House formally, asking it to bring the subject before its members, and the National Credit Association will request the individual banks in the association to take united action. We understand that the remedy proposed in the premises is that remittances shall be accepted only from banks with the bank's draft.

—The Government of New Brunswick asks tenders for \$910,000 in the three per cent. debentures, forty years to run, intended to replace current ones at higher rates. Also for \$100,000 in threes to provide for building permanent bridges in the province.

A SCHEME OF TAXATION.

A pamphlet on "Taxation in Halifax," by Mr. F. H. Bell, assumes that the portion of the taxes levied on real estate is paid in the first instance by the owners and then by degrees distributed over the whole community, "in a proportion that is bound to be just, because it is necessarily in proportion to the extent to which the individuals ultimately paying it choose to avail themselves of the advantages of civic life." This is the axle on which the pamphleteer rolls, as he supposes, triumphantly through the world. Let us consider, just for half a minute. If the proposition of redistribution be true at all it is subject to exceptions numerous enough to break the rule. How are taxes on vacant land shifted from the owner to somebody else? How is the owner of all the property which, in consequence of a great decline in value, no longer leaves anything after the interest on mortgage money is paid, to unload his taxes on some one else? How are the owners of all the thousands of lots, in many of our cities, sold for taxes to recoup themselves, not for the land, but the taxes? How is the owner to recoup himself, when the whole price obtainable for the land at auction is not equal to half the taxes? How are loan companies with lands left on their hands, as a result of foreclosure or private transfer to them as mortgagee, to get back the taxes they have paid on land which brings in no rent, the houses being vacant and for which there is no sale? Who, in the actual condition of many of our cities, will consent to put the landlord in a position to get back taxes he has paid on his land and houses? To do so, it would be necessary to voluntarily offer him a good deal more rent than he is willing to take or than he thinks of asking. In all these cases and many more, as a rule in fact, in the actual state of things, it is a gross fallacy to assume that taxes paid on houses and land, in our cities, redistribute themselves by some automatic process. It is on this fallacy that most theories of the confiscation of rent are based. We warn owners of other kinds of property to beware of the trap: close behind the followers of Henry George press the full blown Socialists, of the two sets, certainly the more philosophic, who deny not only the right to rent, but to interest and profit.

GOING INTO BUSINESS.

The notion of becoming a merchant, a buyer and seller of varied merchandise, a correspondent with other cities, and perhaps foreign countries, has attractions for a great many young men. They mostly ignore the difficulties and risks of a merchant's life, being taken only with the glamor of the active and apparently successful business. Nor will they be warned by the experience of others that the way before them is a rough one. Full of hope and eagerness, they resolve that in *their* cases, at any rate, failure will not be admitted. Statistics of the proportion of storekeepers who are unsuccessful have no deterrent effect upon those who are resolved to get into business.

We are pleased to find the subject of "Going into Business" made the subject of a lecture to the young men of Winnipeg by the president of the Board of Trade of that city, Mr. D. W. Bole. And he has treated it with a breadth of view, and yet with a fullness of detail, that render his lecture not only interesting, but extremely serviceable to those who will take time to study it. Why do so many people fail in business? Mr. Bole asks, after he has given statistics to show that nine-tenths do fail. And his reply is one of the aptest we have seen to that often-asked question: "Most people go into business before they are prepared for the responsibilities of business life." There is no need to