

may be termed a specialty of many houses in the United States—hardware, general household furnishings, including washing machines, wringers, etc., the firm of G. Hardy & Co., of Nottingham, England, tells the American consul in that city, Mr. McFarland, that although the import of American furniture is on the increase there:

We have great difficulty in getting the manufacturers to conform to English styles. We think that if these people would pay a little more attention to English requirements, there would be very much more trade done in this country, and the demand would assume large proportions. The different requirements of the English trade are of a very trifling nature, but, if [the differences are] not carried out, seriously affect sales here. The English people are still prejudiced against American goods, because the fault had been made of shipping over a very common grade. What is wanted here is a good medium quality, finished in the best style, but sent over absolutely in the white—that is, unpolished. The American polish is far too thick and rough for the English requirements. It is liable to get chipped in transit, and, when here, it is impossible to make good without entirely repolishing. The English designs are very little different from the American, but we do not see so many applique carvings. The American exporters seem to be reserved [apparently he does not like to call them stubborn or careless], and will not alter the smaller details.

The warning is given by this Government official that the wood of which United States furniture is made is seasoned far too dry for the English climate, and a few months after the American wood arrives it begins to swell and becomes badly distorted. And he recommends the shipment of bedroom suites, dining tables and most other furniture, "knocked down and in the white." It must be of English design, or modified to suit English taste, properly seasoned, and he would have it polished on arrival in England. It is quite probable that the British agencies of the Canadian Furniture Association have already found out and profited by much that Consul MacFarland here describes. But the warnings given can be taken note of with advantage by others among Canadian exporters.

#### "POOR PAY."

A man requires some boldness to lecture women upon their duties—unless he be a minister of the Gospel, and therefore privileged. Here is one who writes: "Wherever you find a feminine industry, there you will find a ledger full of unpaid accounts." The man who says this is Edward Bok, in the Ladies' Home Journal. And he adds: "Tradespeople, in general, consider women as 'poor pay.'" This is not because they are unable to pay, but because they are negligent of their bills and procrastinate in paying them. We quote further: "The vast majority of sheltered women seem to have no conception of the anxieties, trouble, poverty, suffering, privation, injustice and positive cruelty which they directly inflict upon hardworking women by a carelessness in promptly meeting their bills. If this practice were confined to the few, one might dismiss it with a shrug or a sigh that it existed at all. But it applies to the majority of women. Let a woman look into this matter carefully, and she will be surprised at the evils which result from this careless disregard of obligations."

One of the eminent bankers of New York City

spoke strong words of a like kind not long ago. And he, too laid the severest blame on the well-to-do and rich, giving instance after instance where struggling milliners, deserving dress-makers, as well as mechanics, milkmen, booksellers, artists, were sorely put about through the non-payment of accounts, which need cost the rich and careless debtor no more than the writing of a cheque. There is reason to believe that middle-class and even poor women, afford an excellent example to their richer sisters in paying tradespeople, sempstresses, or artisans for their labors or their wares. This is probably because they realize, better than those whose incomes are counted by the thousands, that the weekly wages of the worker, the monthly sales of the small grocer or baker, must be paid regularly if his house rent or coal bill shall be met. Mr. Bok is not far wrong, then, when he tells of the evils which result from the careless disregard of small monetary obligations.

#### RELATIONS WITH THE WEST INDIES.

We anticipate that when the president and the secretary of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association shall have returned from their projected trip to the West Indies, they will afford us a very much larger fund of information as to the requirements of the public there upon which to base what, it is to be hoped, will spring into a very considerable trade between Canada and that other portion of the British empire. As it is, however, we may gather some very useful hints from such commercial agents' reports as that of Mr. G. Eustace Burke, recently presented to the Dominion Government. As that gentleman points out, Canada unfortunately does but little trading with Jamaica, most of the food consumed, and by far the larger portion of the dress material and shoes worn in this land coming from the United States, which has a very considerable advantage naturally in geographical proximity. Apart from this advantage, however, there is one condition which might easily, and should, be changed. The Americans pay some attention to the requirements of the people, and send those things they need, whereas Canadian manufacturers and exporters do not. We have pointed out this defect more than once before, and we are glad to know that attempts have been made to rectify it. But Canadians have not yet gone far enough. Probably the greatest drawback to the development of satisfactory commercial relations between Canada and Jamaica lies, however, in the lack of direct shipping facilities between the two countries. At present a considerable quantity of Canadian goods go to Jamaica by way of the United States, and a large portion of Jamaica exports to the Dominion passes also through United States ports, which proves that with a good rapid steamship service Canadian and Jamaican goods could be profitably interchanged to a much larger extent than prevails at present. Mr. Burke has urged the Jamaica Government to join with that of this country in subsidizing some such line of steamships, but we believe the former finds its resources somewhat severely taxed by already existing obligations.

Referring to the West Indies as a whole, the Maritime Merchant of the 5th inst. had an able article pointing out that what it considers to be some absolutely essential changes will have to be made before we can hope to develop any very important trade relations with that branch of the Empire. Three conditions have to be borne in mind: We shall have to remove the prejudice in favor of American goods; we shall have to shift the supply business from New York and other American houses, to Halifax, St. John and other Canadian houses. We shall have to make Canada a good market for West Indian sugars. The last mentioned problem is the most important, the others hinging upon it. So far as the writer of that article can see, the only plan to pursue is for our Government to impose a countervailing duty on European bounty-fed sugars, without demanding any tariff compensation from the West Indies. This, it is believed, would immediately open up a large market in this country for West Indian cane sugars, and it would be a steady one, which is one of the chief desiderata at present. Naturally, there would be a loss of revenue, as nearly all our sugar now comes from Europe and pays full duty. But, in view of the largely increased trade which would ensue, and in view of the very great advantage to a portion of the Empire whose treatment in the past has certainly been unfair, it is thought that the Canadian Government should submit to such a loss with good grace.