

fect, and all motives for continued secrecy have passed away.

Max O'Rell will have it that, after one hundred and forty years, the French of Canada are still deeply attached to France. England, he alleges, is able to hold Canada, because the French-Canadians hate the Yankees more than they hate the British. His conclusion, as to the relative degrees of hate, is founded on the fanciful notion that because the French-Canadians refused to join Lafayette, in the American war of revolution, this temper has remained constant to this day. There is in French Canada practically no such thing as political love for France. The first French revolution sickened them with French politics; and if they had been disposed to look to France for a model, after that event, they would have never known what they would be required to worship; Republic, Empire, the restored Bourbons. So, politically, France offers no attractions to French Canada, though they look kindly on the nation to which they trace their origin. That is all. It is true that Papineau praised the French Republic of 1848, but it is not the less true that the aim of the French-Canadian rebels of 1837 was an independent Republic, with Washington for their ideal and their model. But they are now, even to that last survivor of the Pleiade Rouge, M. Bourassa, content to live and die British subjects.

CHANGES IN RETAIL TRADE.

It is a retrospect not without interest to compare former days with present in the retail trade of Canada. There are many changes in general stores to be observed in both town and city. And these changes are perhaps as largely a result of the demands of the customers as of increased enterprise on the part of the storekeeper. One of a number of letters received lately from subscribers to this journal deals with a phase of the altered state of things, thus: "It still does me good to hear from you weekly. It is twenty-eight years since I began to take your paper. I have not been actively in the store business all that time, but I have always been in business life hereabout. [Huron and Bruce.] Many changes have come and gone in that time; many things are better—some not so good. For one thing, we do not appear able to live as simple and as cheap as we did thirty years ago. But on the other hand we have more conveniences now. Better houses and shops; better drainage and light; better roads and streets; greater variety of goods, probably on the whole better goods. And although there is keener competition to-day, I would not like to say but what a man who knows how to do his business can make a living to-day as well as in 1870 when I began, but he cannot make a competency as fast."

Alongside this testimony we place that of former residents of Montreal, lately returned to it after an absence of some years, whose remarks on the changes in appearance of retail stores is thus summarized by The Montreal Gazette of Monday last:

There has been a marked increase in the number of stores exhibiting individuality on the part of their proprietors. In the olden days, a plate glass window, and rows of counters and shelves constituted all that was considered necessary.

Now the artistic perceptions of the architect and the decorator are called into requisition, and proprietors endeavor to make their places attractive by means which but a few years ago would have been considered useless and extravagant. It is the prosperous looking establishments which do the business now. The man with the cobwebs in his windows, the dingy worn out oilcloth on his floor, the roughly kalsomined walls, with inadequate and ill appearing lighting facilities, etc., is being driven to the wall, while those places which are up-to-date, with polished floors, richly grained and highly polished woodwork, stores in which every effort has been made to please the artistic sense of the purchaser, are doing the business.

What is here said implies that the tastes of the people at large as well as of the shop-keeper have undergone change. People want better hotels now-a-days than they used to be contented with, and their dwellings also show improvement. The railways find that neater and more comfortable cars induce travel just as certainly as improved time-tables and lower fares. The like is to be said of steamboats. In accordance with the usage which makes people more at home in bright and cleanly surroundings, the shop-keeper is offering attractive premises as well as attractive goods. And there is probably an idea in the minds of customers that the store which is neatest and best fitted up is likely to have a stock which is up-to-date and good value. The shopping public is easily led by novelty and show. And if by making a show and offering comfortable surroundings a merchant can get the crowd, he can secure their good-will and their subsequent custom, as a rule, by giving them good value. Another feature that is to be remarked about latter-day shopping is the generally better character of the merchandise sold. There are, and always will be, in every town and city, places where a specialty is made of "cheap goods," by which we mean job lots, often of rubbish, at absurdly low prices; and there are many foolish people who run after this sort of thing. But apart from these the average class of textile and other goods bought and sold shows improvement in quality of late years. And this is a satisfactory proof of increased purchasing power among the people, as well as better judgment in the matter of true value.

FURS AND FUR GARMENTS.

The very high prices which prevailed at the January and March fur sales in London were the result of too much optimism on the part of the European trade. Almost immediately upon the conclusion of the March sales it became evident that there was a very serious unsoundness in the German fur trade, resulting shortly afterwards in some heavy failures. Of these a number may be attributed to misfortune, but others, there is no doubt, were due to radically dishonest methods. This state of things led to a marked demoralization in the trade, so far as Germany and Great Britain were concerned, for, as quantities of goods had to be realized on in a hurry, in a great many cases only slaughter values were obtained. The position of the fur trade was so extremely bad in both England and Germany during the summer just past that one of our leading Toronto merchants was induced to look further afield than usual for supplies, fearing that the usual sources would be weakened, owing to the above conditions. This gentleman, therefore, with an idea of pre-