

Canadian Druggist

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OWING to fears on the part of American importers that the McKinley Bill will pass the American Congress—in which case there would be an increase of duty on brushes—the orders received in Europe from the United States during the last few months are so heavy that it is impossible to buy from any large maker and obtain delivery inside of six months. This fact, coupled with the high price of bristles, which shows no signs of abatement, makes brushes very stiff with every prospect of their going higher before the fall is over.

A VERY serious strike is in progress amongst the German scissor grinders. It has been customary in this trade for the masters and workmen to appoint representatives to a board of arbitration, whose duty it has been to settle all disputes. One rule of this board was that in order to be admitted into the union a manufacturer was first compelled to pay into their fund a sum of money equal to all the shortages in wages according to their present scale that he had ever paid his employees. A large firm was lately admitted by the masters without a strict adherence to this rule, the firm in question never having belonged to the union, and refusing to join it if compelled to pay what to them would have been a very large sum of money. The workmen's representatives immediately clamored for the application of the arbitrary rule and being refused their demand, ordered the workmen to strike. From present appearances the struggle will last for months. This will make scissors very scarce this fall. E. Heuser & Co., the Canadian representatives of Boker's razors, who do a large scissors trade, are advising their customers that they will have no scissors to offer them until 1891. Sheffield will probably supply the demand to a certain extent, but the prices will of course rule higher.

A New Line of Fancy Goods.

It is just about impossible these days to have brought before one a large variety of any style of article that has never been seen before. When a manufacturer first thinks of something different from what is at present being sold, he is naturally anxious to feel his way with it and places one or two varieties on the market to see whether or not the public will take to it. Nor has he the ideas in his brain which afterwards appear as he thinks more about the capabilities of the line. Many novelties are bought by a retailer one season and never again. The style is not wanted, or the price may be too high. At any rate nothing short of sacrifice will work it off. For a year or two we have been watching horn goods with consider-

able interest. It has always been our opinion that when well finished and properly put together they filled the bill in usefulness and ornamentality. The wholesalers tell us they have been trying the goods, some for one and some for two years, and that they now think they are going to be for some time at least a staple in fancy goods. The first object of the dealer should be to obtain strong and serviceable goods that will be of no doubtful use to the consumer. Before long they will be adapted to a great many styles not yet thought of. So far we have seen whisk holders, duster holders, shaving sets, perfume stands, ink bottles, hat pegs, album stands, &c.

Chattel Mortgages.

On a previous occasion we have given our opinion of bills of sale, chattel mortgages, and such other preferential liens as are given by store keepers to wholesalers and money lenders. We have tried to warn our friends against this signing of their commercial death warrant in favor of some one whose respect for them is in inverse proportion to their dependence, and who would not hesitate to order their friend, the Bailiff, to see that the extreme penalty of the law is applied simply because times being dull the unfortunate victim of their glib tongues is now unable to meet his engagements. We prefer not to mention the names of those druggists who have been so foolish as to fall into the trap, for sometimes we are misinformed, and then the injustice is very great; but could we depend upon the lists we receive with absolute certainty we would certainly publish them, hoping thereby to deter at least those of our readers who are sensible enough to know that a publication of the fact would ruin their prospects in buying. We have been astonished the last few months to see the number of druggists whose names are found in this list—astonished, but we regard the druggists of Canada, having received the very liberal education that the Government imposes upon them, as an exceptional class of tradesmen—men who should have common sense and backbone enough to refuse to jeopardise their life chances for the simple gratification of a money lender's greed. Better to start in a small way and struggle up with the stamp of independence on one's brow than to make a big bluster to the world for a time and eventually fall a prey to this cankerous disease.

Liquid Ammonia.

THE CAUSE OF THE SUDDEN ADVANCE IN PRICE.

The wholesale price of concentrated liquid ammonia has recently advanced from 5½c a pound to 9c, and at this writing it is extremely difficult to get enough to supply the demand even at that price, says the *Scientific American* of last week. The immediate cause of this great advance in price is due to the unexpectedly large orders from the manu-

facturers of artificial ice which have been received during the last few weeks.

The ammonia which is used in ice making is obtained from what is known as gas liquor, and is produced in the process of carbonization of coal in gas manufacturing. At this season of the year only about 40 per cent. of the amount of gas liquor is to be had which is available in the winter season, owing to the decreased consumption of gas in summer. The laws of several states require gas companies to remove the ammonia from their product as it greatly improves its quality, but it has only been within recent years that the element thus obtained has been utilized for the production of refined ammonia, which is now in such great demand that manufacturers find themselves totally unable to supply it. Still another cause exists for the scarcity of ammonia and that is the changing of a large number of companies from the carbonization of coal in the production of illuminating gas to the making of what is known as water gas. In the latter process no ammoniacal liquor is produced, and thus a productive source of supply of the raw material for the manufacture of concentrated ammonia has been entirely cut off.

Very ingenious machinery is used in extracting the ammoniacal liquor from the gas, and the former is then disposed of to chemical companies, who subject it to a special course of treatment to prepare it for general use.

Sulphate of ammonia is produced by the carbonization of bone and animal matter, but this product is generally employed as a fertilizer. Aqua ammonia has been made from the salt, but not to any great extent, and it so happens that the supply of the sulphate is short, even in foreign lands, where manufacturers have vainly attempted to supply themselves with the much coveted article. Ammonia, also familiarly known as hartshorn, is said to be one of the few substances known to the chemistry of the ancients, being referred to by Pliny under the name of vehement odor, which he evolved by mixing lime with nitrum or what was probably sal ammoniac. The name ammonia was given in ancient times because of the fact that sal ammoniac was originally obtained by heating camel's dung in Libya near the temple of Jupiter Ammon.

Ice manufacturers say that some other source of supply must be found for crude ammonia, as the demand from the producers of artificial ice will greatly increase. It is said that ammonia can be obtained in large quantities from shale, which is a kind of slate found in Pennsylvania, specimens of which are sometimes found mixed with coal. It is claimed, however, by those who are usually depended upon to supply concentrated ammonia that with a winter supply of gas they will have little difficulty in meeting the demand, which is wholly phenomenal at this time, owing to the large number of ice-making machines which have recently been set up.