

even from our sister province of Quebec, or from any civilized country in the world, excepting the United States, we unfortunately copied it from the United States and especially from the State of New York. An able writer in the States says that every State in the Union repeated nearly all the fiscal faults which had previously characterized the financial history of older European States and nationalities, hence the crudities, absurdities and injustices characterizing municipal law in the United States and Ontario. In Ontario we have held to our crude and unfair mode of taxation, but in the United States many sections have departed from it. For instance take Philadelphia, a wonderful progressive city for an inland one, recognising the fact that capital and labour, which means commerce and manufacture, build up a city and give value to land, does not tax capital in commerce or manufacture, but they have a personality tax, which is levied entirely on furniture and on pleasure carriages and horses, a rebate being allowed on all furniture, so that the personality of the poor is exempt from taxation. It is the reverse in Ontario. Taxes are defined to be the tribute which property owes to the municipality for protection. Surely the expensive furniture of the wealthy, their costly jewellery, bonds, horses, carriages, etc., get as much municipal protection, police and light protection, fire and water protection as the small store-keeper's goods, or the manufacturer's plant, or the barber's furniture, or the drayman's cart, or the cabinan's horses and cab, which classes all pay personality taxes. What inducement is there for a man to go into manufacture or commerce in Ontario? If he puts his money into building societies or bank stocks he is, as stated, if taxed at all, only taxed on income but if he puts it into business and employs labour, he is taxed at the same rate on capital, which is fifteen times more, which capital builds and populates the cities, towns and villages of Ontario and gives value to land and increases its value. There is still a worse feature of the case. For instance if you own a piece of property and you are desirous of starting a factory on it or a business, and you mortgage it to raise money to carry it on and employ labour, you are twice taxed on the same capital. To illustrate, the store is assessed say at \$10,000. You borrow \$8,000 on it for the business. Assessment on store \$10,000, assessment on capital in business, \$8,000, total assessment \$18,000, although you have only \$10,000. This does not occur to any other class of the community, nor to any other kind of property, even including real estate. For if the owner of \$10,000 worth of real estate borrows \$8,000 on it and invests it in any other way this capital is not followed or taxed in this manner.

We may mention again that the older civilized countries such as Great Britain, France, Belgium, Prussia, have abandoned entirely personality assessment for municipal purposes.

We, the industrial classes, desire the Legislature to change this injustice of taxing capital in industry. The Legislature of every civilized country is morally bound to do what is right. We therefore expect the Legislature will right this wrong. We are asking no favors, we are demanding only what is proper and fair and what cannot be withheld common justice that a mode of taxation be adopted which will act uniformly and equally to all citizens alike, and we ask to amend the personality assessment so that all classes, be they lawyers or merchants, doctors, officials, clerks or manufacturers, or the retired and wealthy, be taxed uniformly on income alike.

The only argument that has ever been brought forward against righting this monstrous wrong is, that it will increase the taxes on those paying on income and salaries and on real estate. The reply is this, that simply these classes have been relieved and are relieved of a moiety of taxation at the expense of the said industrial classes, and that what would be lost in each municipality by taxing the income of the industrial classes the same as others will be charged to the general assessment of the whole municipality, and will be so little as will hardly be perceptible or felt, and that the industrial classes, from the necessity of conducting business on the most expensive land and in elaborate buildings, will pay the greatest share of the loss in another form. Again we reiterate, Justice demands that the wrong be righted.

## THE TRADE IN TORONTO.

Some people may think that the views expressed by Mr. Caldecott at the annual meeting of the dry goods section of the Toronto Board of Trade, which will be found in another column, are too optimistic. But so far as Toronto is concerned he apparently does not take too sanguine a view of the situation, as all the leading houses report that orders are far ahead of last year for spring goods, and they have every confidence in a much freer circulation of money in a few months hence. Business is not what might be termed booming, but it is healthy, with good prospects. Many retailers so far do not feel inclined to place their orders till later, owing to the poor demand before Christmas, caused by the unseasonable weather, but now that the weather has become more seasonable and farmers are enabled to bring their produce to market, that feeling will soon be banished. The demand for dress goods continues good, and tweed effects still seem to be the most popular style. There is an exceedingly brisk demand for prints. In staples, grays and whites are practically unchanged. Colored cotton goods are all to be placed under one management, a charter having been applied for to incorporate the Canadian Colored Cotton Mills Company, limited. Although prices will probably not be increased at once, this combination will, it is thought, have a tendency to advance prices from fifteen to twenty per cent.

## COLLECTING AGENCIES.

At the Carleton Assizes, Ottawa, on June 6th, the case of Antoine Choquette v. the Canadian Debt Collecting Company, and S. and H. Borbridge, was tried. The plaintiff, who is a compositor in the Government Printing Bureau, sued the defendants for injury done his reputation by having his name posted on one of the Collecting Company's black and yellow posters advertising debts for sale, when he did not owe the sum of sixty cents mentioned in the poster. From the evidence it appeared that the plaintiff's brother Seraphim, also a printer in the Government Printing Bureau, owed S. & H. Borbridge sixty cents, and the defendants had exposed the wrong man. Judgment was accordingly given for plaintiff to the extent of \$25 and costs against the Collecting Company, and the charge against S. & H. Borbridge was dismissed without costs. This does not interfere with the principle laid down in *Green v. Minnes & Burns*, previously referred to in these columns, that a creditor has a perfect right in law to advertise a debt for sale, although his motive in doing so was to coerce the debtor into paying a debt which otherwise the creditor was unable to realize. In the case under review the Collecting Company made the mistake of confounding the plaintiff with his brother. Mr. Justice Rose presided at the trial of both cases. In giving his judgment on the Choquette case, he remarked that he hoped the Upper Court would decide the question raised in his judgment in *Green v. Minnes & Burns*, in which, as we have already stated, he held that the posting of such placards was legal. Until that case was decided he supposed that the Collecting Companies were free to continue to advertise these lists of debts, not for the purpose of bona fide sale, but to bring the debtors to public shame and obloquy. Meanwhile he must warn them that they were treading on the edge of a very deep precipice. Perhaps they are, but so long as the legality of the proceeding is recognized by the court, every advantage should be taken to bring "dead-beats" to obloquy and shame. Many an honest, industrious storekeeper has been ruined by such people and no mercy should be shown them. His Lordship probably overlooked the fact that before such a drastic step is taken as to advertise the debt for sale, the debtor is notified several times of his indebtedness by the Collecting Company, and every opportunity given him until the last moment to pay up. He has, therefore, only himself to blame if he is publicly exposed as a "dead beat." If the case of *Green v. Minnes & Burns* is taken before the Superior Court we sincerely hope that the judgment of Mr. Justice Rose will be sustained, as a reversal thereof would be something to be deeply deplored.