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## THE DRY GOODS REVIEW

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### CURRENT DRIFT.

REPORTS from Great Britain indicate that the cutting of prices in cotton thread, which Canada witnessed during the past summer, is likely to become general. The English manufacturers such as Chadwick, Lee and Roworth have been pursuing a course of business which seems to be displeasing to the thread kings of Paisley—the Coates firm. The Scotch blood at last is up, and the slogan has been heard. The result will be financially disastrous to all, but it may bring about a better understanding among all concerned. It seems to resolve itself into a struggle for supremacy in the thread world. Somebody will be benefitted while the giants fight, and that somebody will be the consumer; but after the battle is over, and honor has been satisfied, then somebody has got to make up the deficiency, and then the rag tag of the earth—the much-to-be-pitied consumer—will have to pay for it. Let the war begin—for you cannot prevent it. Like the thunder shower it must wear itself out.

Poplins have experienced a stronger demand this season, than in previous seasons. This seems to be a peculiarity of the Canadian dress goods trade alone. The Textile

Mercury takes the Irish poplin manufacturers to task because they do not establish amicable relations with the wholesalers, but prefer to sell direct to the consumers. It would seem that the journal is right and the manufacturers wrong. But shouldn't a man be able to do as he likes with his own? A few decades ago, this question would have been regarded as needing no answer; but now it is different. The advanced of democracy, socialism, and liberty has narrowed individual liberty, and hampered individual action. The good of society, the welfare of the community, the rights of the proletariat are coming to be more dwelt upon and of more consequence. Slowly but steadily, socialism is permeating the world's institutions, the world's inter regulations, and the world's thoughts, and some predict a speedy arrival of the time, when a man will never pursue his own interest first, but rather that of the community.

At a recent meeting of the dry goods section of the Board of Trade, it was decided that the Dominion government should be asked to act at once concerning the proposed Insolvency Act, as the country was suffering from the lack of a proper Bankruptcy law. The need is much felt among all classes of mercantile trade. A wholesaler of this city remarked a few days ago, that accounts in the Maritime provinces were so uncertain, that when word arrived that a merchant had failed down there, his firm simply closed the account into the loss and gain account, and tried to forget that they ever had such a customer. But the bill proposed last session had many serious defects which should be remedied before passage: the main objection to it, being its complicated and lengthy nature. The main feature of the bill were as follows. Creditors have power to attach the property of insolvent debtors who refused to assign, unjust preferences are prohibited, provision is made for the equal distribution of

the assets among the creditors, and provision is also made for the discharge of insolvents. There are to be no official assignees, but, except in counties or districts containing cities with a population of more than 20,000 the sheriff of the county or district and in the Province of Quebec the prothonotary; is to be a guardian, and in counties and districts where there is a city of over 20,000, the Board of Trade is to appoint a guardian to take charge of the insolvent estates and call meetings of creditors, and at such meetings liquidators are to be appointed by the creditors. These provisions are apparently all right but they might have been written down in a more concise form.

Some people are taking strong exception to the article on Mercantile Evolution in the previous issue of THE REVIEW. They decidedly object to the idea that the big store is displacing the small store, and that distribution is centralizing. It must not be understood that we thought this change to be imminent, but rather that the change is both possible and probable. People must not expect that what is now, will always be; nor even that what is, is best, and that change means ruin. Change does not mean that the retailers of this country are to be deprived of a livelihood; it simply means that no young man will enter the trade in a small town, if he thinks the central machinery is too strong for proper profits. He will go to a larger and stronger town or away out of range of the big cities into northern Ontario, or the unbounded west. The old men will struggle on and die. The people will need just as great a quantity of goods as ever, and every man will find a place somewhere. The change is going on now, has been going on and will continue to go on. We don't see it, because it is so gradual. Moreover the towns won't necessarily vanish; certain stores will exist and certain trades will be carried on. But there will be more concentration. The little villages of from 25 to 100 houses are now vanishing; some towns in Ontario are growing, and we suppose it is the same in the other older provinces. A few large towns and large cities, will displace numerous small villages, and numerous small towns.