

Probably the department store in the city has to do with the decline of trade in book and stationery stores in the smaller towns. We have seen the voluminous catalogue of a certain house offering books at 12½ cents each, post paid, the regular price of which at the counter of any regular bookseller is 25 cents each, and cheap at that. Why these big stores can sell or do sell goods at such figures is something we cannot go into at the moment. It would seem, that if matters continue as they are, numbers of booksellers must arrange to either go out of business or combine other occupations with bookselling in order to get a livelihood. The volume of trade in books, stationery, toys and fancy goods is so much restricted and the average percentage of profit so much reduced, that people who used to make a living by their sale can no longer do so.

TORONTO TRADE FIGURES.

In the month of June, according to the Bulletin of the Toronto Board of Trade, the foreign imports at Toronto were of the value of \$1,228,758; the exports were valued at \$299,117. In the corresponding month last year the figures were: foreign imports, \$1,167,918; foreign exports, \$285,924, so that there is no marked difference between the two periods. More dry goods were purchased and less metals; more leather and less paper; more fruits, spirits and wines, less paints and colors, more jewellery and less delf. Cloths and worsteds and dress fabrics are the large items in woollens. The following list compares the principal items of dutiable imports:

	June, 1895.	June, 1894.
DUTIABLE IMPORTS.		
Cotton, and manufactures of.....	\$81,099	\$46,089
Fancy goods.....	26,554	32,060
Hats, caps and bonnets.....	7,366	8,913
Silk, and manufactures of.....	42,464	31,879
Woolen manufactures.....	128,558	109,042
Total dry goods.....	\$286,041	\$228,003
Brass and manufactures of.....	\$ 6,081	\$ 4,177
Copper.....	260	1,167
Iron and steel.....	97,193	110,993
Lead.....	4,563	1,820
Metal comp., n.e.o.....	10,293	10,412
Total metal goods.....	\$118,390	\$128,569
Bicycles, etc.....	18,402	26,346
Books and pamphlets.....	17,675	22,506
Coal, bituminous.....	8,346	402
" anthracite (free).....	97,901	162,266
Drugs and medicines.....	15,692	14,544
Earthen, stone and chinaware.....	15,683	28,209
Fruits, green and dried.....	22,830	14,941
Glass and glassware.....	18,217	28,807
Jewellery and watches.....	13,907	11,040
Leather and m'frs of.....	27,553	18,968
Musical instruments.....	8,907	7,850
Paints and colors.....	10,191	11,241
Paper and manufactures of.....	29,003	33,231
Spirits, wines and cordials.....	9,606	4,576
Wood goods.....	7,794	12,872

The free imports of last month total much lower than in the previous June, the principal reason being the heavy imports of hard coal in 1894, and also the comparatively heavy purchases of hides and skins. We compare the chief items:

	June, 1895.	June, 1894.
FREE IMPORTS.		
Coal, anthracite.....	\$97,901	\$162,266
Coffee.....	9,566	9,211
Dyes and chemicals.....	29,450	20,043
Fruits (bananas and pine apples).....	31,941	23,887
Hides and skins.....	10,139	42,175
Jute cloth and yarn.....	6,000	5,346
Metal goods and steel rails.....	26,427	20,154
Settlers' effects.....	14,380	12,484
Sisal, Manilla, hemp.....	6,036	
Sugar.....	4,876	4,876
Tea.....	26,140	16,952
Tobacco leaf.....	1,612	3,126
Wool, etc.....	3,745	3,437
Add coin and bullion.....	12,812	11,587

Among exports, it is noticeable that manufactured goods are the largest items of the month, whether in 1895

or 1894. Leather is the most considerable item named, amounting in value last month to \$81,769. Wood goods, which presumably means furniture, is a fair sized item. But nearly half the total consists of "other articles," and to discover what these are involves enquiry at the Custom House.

	June, 1895.	June, 1894.
EXPORTS OF CANADIAN PRODUCE.		
Produce of The Mine.....	\$ 34	\$ 78
" Fisheries.....		50
" Forest.....	9,006	10,437
" Field.....	5,798	6,121
Animals, and their produce.....	125,129	124,578
Manufactures.....	145,958	128,137
Miscellaneous.....		454
Total.....	\$285,925	\$269,855

SIX MONTHS' FIRES IN MONTREAL.

Figures which claim some attention are those made public on Saturday last by the Montreal Fire Commissioners, giving the number of fires in Montreal, their causes and the losses for the first six months of the present year. The losses amounted to \$159,458, and the insurance on the properties was \$701,817. Investigations were held to discover the origin of 186 fires, and at these investigations 379 witnesses were examined. Of the 186 fires the number occurring in dwellings was 57, or nearly a third of the whole, but the loss in three fur store fires more than doubled that of all these dwellings. We give a partial list of the fires:

	Loss.	Insurance.
57 dwellings.....	\$15,837	\$69,875
5 dry goods shops.....	10,740	29,300
3 fur stores.....	35,500	43,250
3 fancy goods shops.....	8,390	10,600
18 stables, hay lofts and sheds.....	7,203	19,046
11 grocery, tea and coffee stores.....	3,968	14,265
5 boot and shoe shops.....	6,290	25,500
4 millinery shops.....	2,305	3,600
4 confectionery shops.....	1,059	23,300
2 paper and stationery stores.....	6,000	42,000
4 boarding houses.....	2,225	5,060

Then there were cigar shops, picture shops, carpenters' shops, butchers', jewellers' shops, drug stores, in fact all kinds of shops, some factories and mills, though luckily in these last the losses were not heavy. The principal ascertained causes of fires were overheated stoves and furnaces, which accounted for 17½ per cent. of the whole; matches, whether in the hands of children (7 fires), the mouths of rats (8 fires), or matches otherwise ignited, 12 per cent.; coal oil lamp and stove explosions, 18 per cent.; defective chimneys, grates, stovepipes, 6 per cent.; cigar and pipe smoking, 6 per cent. Four fires were attributed to spontaneous combustion, five to gas jets, two to incendiarism—at least this is how we should classify the items put down by Messrs. Perry and Poirier, fire commissioners, as follows: "Fires, maliciously set, 1; from incendiarism, 1." Causes unknown number forty-eight.

TRADE WITH SOUTH AFRICA.

We have already written respecting the possibility of increased trade between this country and South Africa, a colony which is making rapid strides of late years in both population and inward and outward trade. Its imports in 1891 were of the value of \$45,600,000, as against \$16,500,000 in 1886, and among the principal items in the list are such wares as Canada might well supply. Cotton and woolen goods, clothing, breadstuffs, meats, furniture, coal, leather, saddlery, boots and shoes, soap, musical instruments, field implements, spirits, beer and ale, paper, stationery and wood goods—these may be sent from Montreal or Halifax, quite as well as from New York or Boston.

For some months a Canadian firm has been endeavoring to stimulate interest among Canadians in this distant