

big-headedness was pleased to allow, and Mr. Perret has, time and again, been refused any chance to vindicate his fair name, by proving that the goods were legitimately bought from some of the most reputable wholesale houses in Canada. He denied point blank the charge of smuggling preferred against him, and asked for an immediate investigation. He offered to produce invoices and witnesses if necessary to prove his contention that many of the goods seized were of Canadian manufacture, and that the rest of them were bought from Canadian dealers. For reasons known only to himself, Mr. Mingaye refused to allow Mr. Perret to have anything to say in the matter, and treated him with the utmost disrespect. Some of our Toronto wholesale merchants, of undoubted standing in their own city, when in Winnipeg, interviewed Mr. Mingaye in reference to the seizure, and tried to find out from him whether there was any ground for his action, but they were received by that gentleman in a most uncivil and boorish manner, and gruffly told to mind their own business and let "His Mighty Highness" alone. The probability is that Mr. Mingaye thought that Mr. Perret would get tired of waiting and finally compromise with the officers in order to get his goods back, but in this he was disappointed. Through the assistance of some wholesale friends in Toronto, the Minister of Customs was communicated with, and he instructed the collector to furnish to a Toronto jeweler, visiting Winnipeg on business, all the facts in the case, and on his getting possession of them, and giving the collector some pretty plain talk, Mr. Mingaye was kind enough to permit Mr. Perret to take possession of part of his goods, holding the balance, however, for further proof. The Toronto wholesale jeweler referred to informs us that he went carefully through all the goods seized, amounting to about some \$6,000, and that, with the exception of a few hundred dollars' worth of old jewelry that had been cleaned and recarded, he had been able to completely identify every piece of the goods as having been legitimately bought from Ontario wholesale houses. The Customs officers were themselves so well satisfied about some of the goods that they, some time ago, gave up about \$500 worth of them. Of English jewelry, which can only be bought from Canadian wholesalers, they had seized about \$2,000. Of watch movements and cases, every one of which this gentleman had checked off and found to correspond with Canadian invoices, there were about seventy; thirty of which were gold and forty silver. The balance of the goods was old stock, the numbers of which had been lost in recarding, and which, he had no doubt, had been in Mr. Perret's store for years.

This gentleman also states that both himself and the Winnipeg retail jeweler who was called in to assist him to identify the goods were of the opinion that the seizure was a most unfair one in every respect. When the goods were taken from Mr. Perret's store, they were thrown promiscuously into valises, and fine colored gold locket, brooches and earrings were mixed up in delightful confusion with steel watch chains and other common truck but little calculated to improve either their value or appearance. The opinion of these gentlemen, both of whom are practical jewelers of many years standing, is that, even though Mr. Perret succeeds in getting all of his goods back again, they will not be worth within twenty per cent. of what they were when they were taken from his store. When to this is added the loss that Mr. Perret's business has sustained from the want of his stock, and the bad effect that such a seizure necessarily must have upon the buying public, we think that

that gentleman has a good case against the Government for damages.

We have not now, and never had, any sympathy for smugglers, and would be pleased to see the authorities enforce the penalty to its fullest extent by putting all such people in prison for the second or any subsequent offence, but while we think thus strongly on the subject, we would also be careful to have the person accused of smuggling receive only the fairest kind of play, and be convicted only on the clearest proof. We do not think that the authorities should make seizures simply for the purpose of obtaining information, but should have some substantial grounds to work on before they commenced proceedings at all. Once a seizure is made, it should be pushed through at once; the whole charge against the accused should be squarely made, and if he could not refute it satisfactorily, the goods should at once be confiscated.

If Mr. Mingaye's action is strictly legal the sooner the law is changed the better, for as it at present stands, it lies in the power of such a man to ruin almost any merchant against whom he has a grudge.

The case of Mr. Perret is one of the most glaring acts of injustice that we ever heard of, and we can scarcely conceive it possible that such a thing could be done in the nineteenth century, and in such a free country as Canada. It smacks more of mediæval France than anything we ever heard of on this side of the Atlantic, and one cannot help recalling the Bastille and the *lettres-de-cachet* of Louis and his favorite, when hearing of such tyranny.

There is an old saying that if you give a scoundrel rope enough, in the long run he will be sure to hang himself, and we think that Mr. Mingaye has practically been his own executioner, so far as personal reputation and prospects are concerned. When he is kicked out of his present situation, as he certainly deserves to be, the feeling amongst the merchants of Winnipeg will be one of extreme thankfulness, that they have got rid of a petty tyrant, whose place can be profitably filled by some fair minded gentleman, who can be just to the Government and at the same time courteous to the public.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PEDDLER NUISANCE.

Editor TRADER:

SIR, It is high time the retail jewellers were getting roused up and making an effort to put down the peddlers who are daily robbing the people and killing many a legitimate business. Who encourages the peddlers? Is it not the wholesaler who sells to the gents' furnishing stores, &c.? Then it is the duty of every retail jeweler who employs a journeyman watchmaker, or does the watch repairing themselves, to put their shoulders to the wheel and boycott all who will not agree to sell to none others than a legitimate jeweler. I have worked in quite a few towns and cities before locating here, but must confess this is the worst town for peddlers of every description I ever saw. Cheap plated ware and snide jewelry, with slick-tongued peddlers, find many a victim in this border town.

In conclusion, I would say that I heartily approve of your ideas of protection to the retail trade, and trust that every