

market materially. The prevailing prices for fleece when the quality is right are about 18½ or even 19c. per pound for washed, 14c. for rejected, and 11½c. for unwashed. Pulled wools show also a marked improvement, in sympathy with the better standing of fleece and with the situation in the outside market. Supers are quoted locally at 20 to 21c., and extras at 22 to 24c. A late despatch from London reports an advance of 10 per cent. in cross-breds at the wool sales this week, and this, of course, is another strengthening factor.

Of course, the future run of the market for wool depends largely upon the situation across the line, and as to this the news which comes to hand is of a very conflicting nature. From Boston, a great woolen centre, comes word that the manufacturers have bought little of anything, and show slight interest in anything but medium and low grades, which they are taking in hand-to-mouth fashion. New wool is arriving freely, and as stocks of old are in light compass, there is no pressure to sell. The consumers or manufacturers consider the prices asked altogether too high, and are waiting to see the outcome of their efforts to boost the prices of light-wear clothing materials before entering the market at all. In the wool-growing districts, however, there is a totally different story to tell. Dealers have become quite excited, are buying freely and at higher prices than ever. It is difficult to reconcile their attitude with that of the buyers in the manufacturing districts. In New York the situation seems to be clearing, and dealers and jobbers seem to think it is no use holding out against high prices much longer. In Great Britain the wool market continues very firm, with only small supplies coming forward. Old stocks, too, are pretty well cleaned up.

Returning to the domestic market, the Canadian mills are showing greater vigor in their orders for pulled wools. It looks as if the fall trade is likely to be an active one. Our mills are showing great enterprise in the turning out of materials heretofore only affected by the European manufacturers, and in some cases the attempt has been crowned with full success. A feature which should meet with general approval from the consuming public is that in design and general appearance these home-made fabrics are, so to speak, a cross between the quietness of the English and the light, *chic* airiness of the French. For climatic reasons and otherwise the compromise is commendable.

MILD-MANNERED THIEVING.

A most unusual thing has happened in banking circles. A bank clerk in Woodstock has gone wrong and robbed his bank of some seven hundred dollars. And yet he is a man who neither drinks nor gambles; neither plays the races nor the stock exchange; nor does he, so it is said, give way to other expensive forms of dissipation that beset the feet of the young men. He appears to be, indeed, as things go now-a-days, a well-behaved young man, of rather domestic habits. What, then, induced him to steal from his bank? And what did he do with the money he stole? By his own confession he was fond of good clothes, and liked expensive tobacco, and it was to provide these that he became a thief, since his salary would not permit him to buy clothes as "swell" or tobacco as fragrant as he chose. Little by little he

took the money—steadily his tailor's bills and tobacconist's bills ran away with the remnant of his salary—month after month he got deeper into the web he was weaving for his own ruin, while all the time an outwardly respectable church-going person, "with no bad habits."

It is an unusual case, as we have said, supposing it to be truly stated as above. Here is a young fellow with no virulent vices, no repellent or disgusting habits, who resolves to be well-dressed *coute qui coute*. As some fellows must have the best horse in a livery stable, the finest bicycle out of doors, the most expensive canoe on the Bay, so this particular fellow must have the best-fitting clothes, the daintiest pipes. It is as if he had said, with the French philosopher, "Give me the luxuries of life, and I will dispense with its necessities." There are people who, reading of his case, shake their heads and insist that there is a woman in it, unbeknownst. But the bank which employed him seems to have taken Hobbs' measure as belonging to the lighter type of dishonest men, for it has declined to prosecute, and the prisoner was discharged on Monday last. The amount he stole has presumably been made up. An odd sort of villain, surely; out of place on this continent and in this age; nothing dashing or intrepid or wholesale about his vices, for it is only a mouldy sort of dishonesty that robs banks in order to buy tobacco and trousers. We are not even told that he played bridge.

We cannot find warrant in the circumstances, as some appear to do, for any impeachment of the honesty of bank clerks, as a whole or any sweeping condemnation of their habits in private life. Bank clerks are no worse than other clerks (some of them think themselves a great deal better). Fools are among them, and cads, but the honest man, the capable employee, the unpretending gentleman are among them, too, and far outnumber the others. Nearly every case of defalcation which occurs proves, however, that room still exists for reminding people, young and old, of the folly of extravagance, and the safety of living within one's income. These days of show and glitter, of fast life and the expensive fads of fashion have drawn many into expenditures which they cannot afford. If a warning will help some of them to give up foolish and expensive whims, and live honest and rational lives, that warning they now have.

FIRE INSURANCE IN CANADA A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

FIRST ARTICLE.

At a time like the present, when fire insurance matters are attracting so much attention, it may not be uninteresting to glance at the position of fire business in Canada a hundred years ago, a date at which even in England the business was in an experimental stage, and none of the largest corporations of to-day had yet taken being. An unique opportunity of doing this is afforded by the recently completed restoration and embellishment of the old office premises of the oldest Canadian fire insurance company, the "Quebec," on St. Peter Street, in that city. From papers found in the old foundation stone and other documents disinterred in consequence of the alterations some curious and interesting particulars are available. One little pamphlet of fourteen pages, published in France, without author's name, by "The Printer of the Laws of the Very Excellent Majesty