

for surely no sane person would allow another to get into his debt who could pay or not just as he chose. This we say would be bad enough, but it would affect the people who passed the law more injuriously than it would outsiders, because they would be compelled on account of the want of credit to pay cash for everything they bought.

In the retroactive clause of this bill however is the chief menace to the rights of outsiders, and it is against this part of it that the kick will chiefly be directed. At the present time there are millions of dollars of outstanding accounts due all over Manitoba, which if this Act becomes law will be practically worthless. The petition of the Ontario Association of Agricultural Implement Manufacturers alone shows that the farmers of Manitoba owe for reapers, mowers and such like machinery the enormous sum of one million dollars, a very large percentage of which may as well be at once written off as worthless if this retroactive clause is allowed to go into force. The Manitoba merchants themselves are just in about as bad a fix as outsiders, and like the proposed law just about as much as the others do. Meetings have already been held by the Winnipeg, Montreal and Toronto Boards of Trade and they have all unanimously passed resolutions strongly condemning the Act. The prevailing opinion amongst business men is that it is simply an Act to confiscate other peoples' money and to make a bid for emigrants. That such a state of affairs can be any benefit to the emigrants we very much doubt, and we are strongly of the opinion that most of those who come from Britain to settle in that Province would very much prefer to pay any debts they may incur instead of being forced to be honest because they can get no one to trust them. We think if the legislature of Manitoba refuse to withdraw this obnoxious and unjust measure that this is a case where the Federal Government may with a great deal of acceptance to the people at large exercise their veto power and kill the bill by disallowance they ever did.

If they do not interfere however, and the legislature of Manitoba have not common sense enough of themselves to amend it, we predict a very "cold" time for the prairie province as long as such an iniquitous measure remains upon their Statute Books.

Correspondence.

Editor Trader :

DEAR SIR,—In the article on "The First Locomotives," in THE TRADER for June there is an error in that it speaks of Robt. whereas it should be George Stephenson. If I have read Smiles aright the article in question should read George and not Robert Stephenson. Robert was George's 'a and inherited very largely his father's inventive genius.

Yours respectfully,

THOS. EVANS.

Alliston, June 3, 1885

[Right you are, friend Evans.—ED. TRADER.]

Selected Matter.

STORIES OF FINGER RINGS.

A story is told of the ring in connection with the great Magna Charta, or rather with the king and one of the twenty-four barons selected to enforce the provisions of that great foundation stone of English liberty. Eustace de Vesce had a very beautiful wife, and king John, as immoral as he was treacherous and cruel, coveted her possession. The lady, however, lived some distance from the court, and in order to accomplish his designs the king had recourse to stratagem. Observing one day while at table that the baron had a ring upon his finger, he laid hold upon it, and remarking that he had a like stone which he wished set in the same style, kept the article as a copy. Having thus secured this token he immediately sent it to the lady in her husband's name, with a message that if she wished to see him alive she should come at once. Fortunately, de Vesce happened to be out riding when she came, and met her on the road, when explanations followed, and the intentions of the king were disclosed. In order, therefore, to punish John, as well as secure the safety of his wife, the baron found a common wanton, and clothing her in the garments of the lady, compelled her to assume the character and meet the king. The story pleasantly concludes with an account of the monarch's chagrin when, after brutally taunting the husband regarding the exploit, he learned that the supposed lady was nothing but a common strumpet.

But perhaps the most conspicuous example of the ring in English history was

queen Elizabeth, and though the story is strongly romantic in its nature, it is also tinged with tragedy and pathos. The records clearly inform us that Elizabeth had many male favorites during her long reign, upon whom she bestowed as much affection as might be given by a queen to her subject, and equally as a chaste maiden to her lover. Among them all, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, appears to have gained most completely the heart of the queen. Upon him she showered privileges and perquisites with an unsparing hand, bestowing upon him all the interest and wealth of affection which the promptings of her love for him could suggest, and among other tangible evidences she gave him a ring as a pledge, intimating "that if ever he forfeited her favor, if he sent it back to her, the sight of it would insure her forgiveness." Subsequently Essex was arrested for treason, and not without cause. During the trial, and before the execution, the queen waited anxiously for the token which never came, and though the whole world doubted that she would allow Essex to be brought to the scaffold, such was her anger and chagrin at his obstinacy that she refrained from interference, and the head of her last and best loved favorite fell beneath the axe. But the pride of the earl was not as stubborn as the queen imagined, as appears from the narrative of a descendant of that house, lady Elizabeth Spelman, for she stated that "when Essex lay under sentence of death he determined to try the virtue of the ring by sending it to the queen and claiming the benefit of her promise, but knowing he was surrounded by the creatures of those who were bent on taking his life, he was fearful of trusting it to any of his attendants. At length, looking out of his window, he saw, early one morning, a boy whose countenance pleased him, and him he induced by a bribe to carry the ring which he threw down to him from above, to the lady Scrope, his cousin, who had taken a friendly interest in his fate. The boy, by mistake, carried it to the Countess of Nottingham, the cruel sister of the fair and gentle Scrope, and as both these ladies were of the royal bedchamber, the mistake might easily occur. The Countess carried the ring to her husband, the lord admiral who was the deadly foe of Essex, and told him the message, but he bade her suppress both." It is a sardonyx, and said to be the identical ring given by the queen to Essex. It has descended from