

"I was a huntin' fer them there things last week, but I reckoned they must have been sold out, somehow." Why didn't he hang things to the ceiling? you will ask. Well, so he did. He had here a string of corsets, tied one below the other—indelicateman! Next to them a string of bed-cords dangling down; yonder pots and kettles, tinware and scythes swaying and jangling in the breeze. When you passed under those scythes they made you feel like the old chap in history, who had a sword hung over his head by a single hair. But this dealer objected to hanging many things up, for he had no step-ladder, and he wanted to have things handy to get at, he said.

Young fellow, thinks I to myself, you would be the better of some talking to about dead or forgotten stock, about depreciation and waste. But Chum snorted at me when I began my lecture, so I said I would wait till I got home, and then maybe I would make a text of this backwoods merchant.

Such a man as he is, I am safe in saying, never examined his goods and compared them with the invoice on receipt from the city. Here he runs a risk of loss, either by imperfect filling of the order or by deficient quantity or bad order. Then he did not mark all his goods with the selling price, let alone cost price, and so trusted much to memory. As he was unfamiliar with merchandise, its makers and values, his guesses were apt to be wild and often unfavorable to himself. He had allowed his supply of hosiery to be mixed up, the proper pairs separated, and so when a woman had found one stocking of the right size there was a long search for its mate. Similarly, his stock of boots and shoes was not only dusty, but getting shop-worn and depreciated. Whilst we were there a girl came in to get shod, tried on one of J. & T. Bell's No. 4 buskins and smiled contentedly. But when Mr. Store-keeper wanted the other one, it was a case of Hunt the Slipper, and keep other customers waiting until he found it. Here, I thought, was room for improvement.

It looked as if this country shop-man did not wash his hands any oftener than he swept his shop. He had the fist of a ship-carpenter, and to see him handling ribbons or muslins with those paws was enough to give a dude the dumb ague. Of course, one did not expect to find marble-topped wash-stands in shops in the woods of North Ontario; but soap and water were not hard to get, and a tin wash hand-basin on a block of wood would have been a sensible thing for a man to have who was selling varieties of all kinds from a needle to an anchor. Still we saw nothing of the kind provided, and if we had made a hint that it was necessary, he would like enough have told us that "clean dirt won't hurt; and you city fellers is too particular about finger-nails and sich."

AN OLD CLERK.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

A Canadian newspaper man, especially one who has to do with commercial facts and figures, ought to be profoundly grateful to the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa in general, and to the compiler, Mr. S. C. D. Roper, in particular, for "The Statistical Year Book of Canada for 1889." The quantity of information about Canada to be found in it is remarkable, and that about other countries somewhat unexpected; but the way in which the statistical information is presented, is very generally to be welcomed—the labor and pains which are manifest in the compilation of tables and percentages are

enormous. There are 575 pages in the book, but if it had only those beginning with 101, and ending with 238, we should still feel disposed to throw up our hat and hurrah for the compiler. For years THE MONETARY TIMES has had to use eyesight and gas light in poring over trade and navigation returns and other blue books, and making calculations as to comparative trade from their figures. But lo! thanks to this volume, here are the calculations ready made. The classification of imports and exports on pages 181 to 175, with reference to the tariff, is a good idea. In many respects it is shown that the trade of Canada is remarkable when compared with that of other countries. The tables of value of exports to different lands, and those of relative values of goods exported, are valuable. Some of the paragraphs an inch long, indeed, are nuggets of condensed information representing a whole week's work. Chapter ten, too, on social and other statistics, contains much that it is well to have at hand in a convenient form. It would be a good scheme to present some hundreds of copies of this admirable and, we presume, authentic hand book on Canada to certain public men and newspaper writers of the United States, who, through ignorance and prejudice, libel Canada perpetually, and also to not a few people in high places in Great Britain, and on the Continent, who look condescendingly at us through a mental eye-glass, as much as to say: "Ah, yes, of course; fine big country, plenty of land, don't you know; good hunting, too. Should like to go out there to see Niagara Falls—that sort of thing; but their winters are frightful. Good place to send street Arabs and ne'er-do-well sons to, though."

STATUTES OF THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO, passed in the session held in the 53rd year of the reign of Queen Victoria, being the fourth session of the sixth Legislature of Ontario; Sir Alex. Campbell, K.C.M.G., Lieut.-Governor. Toronto: printed by Lud K. Cameron, Queen's Printer, 1890.

CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL FAIR; to be held under the auspices of the Exhibition Association of the City and County of St. John, N.B., from September 24th to October 4th, 1890. Ira Cornwall, secretary. This pamphlet of 120 pages gives views of St. John and a map of the Gulf route, showing the routes from that city of the Furness Line of steamers to London, and the Hansa Line to Hamburg and Antwerp, the Steamship Company's Line to the West Indies, and the Coast Lines to Portland, Boston, and New York. There is a map of the C.P.R. short line in the book. It also gives a description of the city, the regulations and premium list of this year's industrial and agricultural fair. They are "hustlers," these St. John men, determined that all the world shall know something of their city. And it is a city very well worthy of a visit.

—Hamilton takes pride in her telephone exchange, which is declared to have practically one thousand subscribers. We are not told what practically means in this connection, but the Times gives a list of 520, which includes 325 dwellings, 33 law firms, 36 doctors, 50 grocers, 21 butchers, 31 coal and wood yards, 10 dry goods firms, and 14 hotels. There are thirty-five employees in the exchange, it appears, besides eighteen pay stations in different parts of the city. If it be true that Hamilton has a telephone subscriber to every ten families in the city, there is probably room for the boast that "this record is almost unequalled in America." Doubtless the Bell

Telephone Company does its business as well as telephone companies anywhere. "On the average, about five thousand calls per day are made through this office. Five hundred and fifty miles of wire has been used in the construction of the lines to the various offices and houses. From tests made last month, it is shown that the average time to get a reply from the central was 4.07 seconds, against the previous month a trifle over 5 seconds. This month, so far, it is a little over 4 seconds. For outside connections with Toronto, London and other points, from 7 to 9 minutes is the time taken from the moment the call is first made until you hear the distant 'Hello!'"

—Exports from Ontario to the United States amounted in the fiscal year 1889 to no less than \$23,449,000. Of this, however, \$838,704 worth was not the produce of Canada. The aggregate value of Canadian products sent to the States was \$22,611,000, of which total \$1,534,393 worth went from the consular district of Hamilton. The showing made by Hamilton in this particular up to the close of the fiscal year 1890 (30th June), is not so favorable; the value of her Ontario exports then was only \$1,399,264, a falling off equal to \$135,129. The principal decrease appears in apples, barley, cattle and eggs. The decrease in barley alone amounts to \$78,000. The principal items are: Barley, \$602,296.99; eggs, \$158,160.25; horses, \$84,588.50; household goods, \$112,583.52; sheep and lambs, \$51,221.15; wool, \$130,095.48. There is an increase of \$49,272.86 in wool. "I think there will be a decrease in the agricultural products sent to the States," said Col. Monaghan, the American consul. The duty on barley will be increased from 10 to 20 cents per bushel. It will affect eggs, which are now free, as under the bill the duty will be 5 cents per dozen. It will affect live stock and horses, the duty being increased from 20 to 30 per cent.

—The sort of criminal recklessness that for the sake of saving a dollar will risk the loss of a score of lives, receives illustration in the disaster to the steamer "Tioga" at Chicago. Investigation into the causes of the explosion shows that an officer of the Genesee Oil Company, of Buffalo, must bear the responsibility for the deaths of some people. Employees of that corporation, apparently to save freight charges, put a cargo of gasoline on board the ship that no sane captain would have thought of carrying in such quantity. That cargo was put on board under false pretences, having been billed and marked as ordinary mineral oil, a sufficiently dangerous article of freight in itself. "The purpose," says the despatch, "of that false billing and misleading marking was the saving of a few dollars of freights." What is the adequate punishment for the hardened man or men who, for such a reason, would take such a risk?

—A practical proposal has been made to various municipalities in Frontenac county by the Kingston Board of Trade. It is in the shape of a circular letter, inviting each municipality to assist in making a full and complete exhibit of the minerals of the district at the Midland Central Fair, Kingston, in September. The mineral wealth of Canada, great as it undoubtedly is, will never be developed as it should until the average investor or capitalist is made aware, by some means other than blue-books, or the assurances of prospectors, that a good return awaits the investment of his money.