

"WOE TO THE VANQUISHED."

To one who observes the signs of the times there is something pathetic in the slow but steady subjugation of the smaller shops in modern cities by the big departmental store. The despairing cry of the gladiators of the ancient Roman time—*Ti morituri salutant!*—"We who are about to die salute you," came to mind on witnessing, some months ago, a dry goods dealer of the expiring class gazing at the vast front and the emblazoned windows of a great city store, as if taking a mental photograph of his enemy. And yet, looking to modern tendencies in various directions, how can one expect it to be otherwise? The great steamers on lake or ocean are driving the smaller steamers and sailing vessels off many accustomed routes. The big trunk lines gobble up the smaller railways. Wholesale houses with large capital and extensive connections crush lesser houses to the wall. Associated capital, in the shape of banks and loan societies, make it hard for private banks or single lenders. It is a development of the present age.

All the same, it goes to one's heart to witness, as the writer did one morning lately, the efforts of a dry goods dealer on Yonge street, somewhere between Queen and College streets, to prolong his existence. It was early morning—half-past seven or eight—and a thin man with an anxious look was in his shirt sleeves, 'ragging out' the front of his store. His little daughter, a neat, slender figure with a blanched face, was helping him, as he placed benches at the sides of the doorway and proceeded to pile his most seductive wares upon them.

"Now Essie, when I've finished this pile of gingham, I'll hang up those wrappers at the front of the window. You might just be put-

ting tickets on these dress goods—I wrote them last night, you remember."

"Yes, father, I know. And then, after that I'll put prices on those shirt-waists in the window, if you like."

"Very well, my dear, very well, you're quite a help to your father. We ought to sell a fair share to-day—there's an excursion coming over from the States, and the people won't all get into Simpson's and Eaton's. Yes, I got that line of prints very low, very low, and if people only knew good value when they saw it, we should sell many a dress off those. Put the tickets on the new hose, Essie, will you, and then call Joey to help me with the step ladder."

The little creature disappears (probably upstairs, for the family evidently live over the shop), and the present scribe lingers, with guilty curiosity, under the pretence of waiting for a car. Presently she comes down and tells her father that Joey isn't to be found, and "mother thinks he's gone down to the bay, somewhere, —he did want a swim so bad."

"Swim! I'd like to know what time him or me's got for swimming. By George! I'll give him a leathering, and he'll go without his breakfast."

"Oh, please, father," pleaded the little maiden, "can't I help you with the ladder? Joey was kept up so late last night with those new goods, he never got any play. And he'll be awful hungry, too."

"Hungry, will he? It will be a mercy if we don't all go hungry some day soon, if trade doesn't mend. Lord knows it looks blue enough, Essie."

Just then the car, or something else, carried the reporter away and he was soon down at the office. An hour later, as he passed on his way to Spadina, via a Yonge and College car, the scene of the morning fresh in his mind, he

looked for the shop. And there, sure enough, was every attraction that the poor shopkeeper could devise on sidewalk, awning and window. The man himself had on a black alpaca coat, and stood with expectant face just inside the door, rubbing his hands and looking out—but there was not a customer in the shop. May be the excursion had not arrived.

A MONTREAL BUSINESS DREAMER.

DEAR EDITOR,—I observe with admiration that your letter makes only modest mention of your Toronto Exhibition and generous anticipatory mention of ours in Montreal, which from an Ontario man is *something*. Speaking of these events, I don't think I can get up to Toronto for the usual gala time you have at your Fair, when even your stern "morality" laws are relaxed, and you will let a thirsty man have a glass of lager, and will even permit him to stay out at the exhibition fireworks till eleven or on the city streets till twelve. I have assured some of my friends here that, *experto crede*, they may safely visit Toronto, and, if they behave as well as they do here, Archibald will not "run them in." Only they must not try it on at any other time than fair time.

You say that business is quiet, that "the boys" seem to be all away, and that H is lonely as a grass widower. Who wouldn't be lonely? At this midsummer season most men are that way—grinding at the desk all day, sad, moping, and unhappy at night—their spouses and children away at the seaside or the country, having "a very quiet time," although the naughty illustrated papers insist on showing up the ladies as flirting with the few men at the seashore, dancing, driving, "biking," etc., and anything but what one would call strictly a quiet time. And we poor men, who in the absence

A VISIT

to our Warehouse during the openings will convince the independent buyers that we set the pace for the fancy goods trade.

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