

which they know to be grossly wrong, and which they have proved to be wrong by having the lumber weighed, load by load, on market hay scales. In such cases where the weights are clearly proven refunds have been made by the railway companies; but time is too valuable and profits on lumber too small to admit of checking the weight in this manner as a regular thing. At present the loaded cars are either weighed *en route* or at point of delivery, the tares as marked on the cars being deducted.

Sometimes the incorrect charges have been traced to the fact that the tares marked on the cars have been wrong, or that there was a large quantity of cement, broken stone, frozen or wet manure, in the bottom of the car when loaded; or if the car be an open or flat car and thus exposed to the weather it may come in saturated with rain, ice, or snow, all of which, weights and too often weighs heavier than the allowances made by the companies to cover it. Further, it has been observed that sometimes while cars are being weighed coupled together in a train the drawheads of the cars next the car being weighed have borne down heavily on the car which was upon the scale, thereby making it show incorrect weight.

Now, sir, this grievance of our trade is no small matter to us. At present it is impossible to determine within \$1.00 a thousand feet what lumber is going to cost at point of delivery, and our margin of profit will not stand any such uncertainty as that. It is our frequent experience to have excess freights eat up more than the expected margin of profit on our transaction.

If it were that cars to be used for lumber could be weighed at point of shipment, immediately before being loaded and immediately after, and the freight bill made out accordingly, the present system, objectionable though it is, would be much more fair, and the results it would doubtless be less mysterious. But the erection of scales and their operation by the railway companies at all of the various points where lumber is shipped seems to me impracticable. Should the railway companies erect scales, as they now talk of doing, at some of the more important shipping points, it would certainly lessen the evil so far as these points are concerned, but the more numerous and smaller points would be in much the same position as at present.

What is needed is a tariff, giving rates of freight per thousand feet. The recent meeting of lumber dealers and railway men in Montreal we are in hopes will be productive of good results.

LUMBER SHIPPER.

Orillia, 10th April, 1889.

LEATHER TRADE METHODS.

Editor MONETARY TIMES:

SIR,—I see you are writing up trade methods in other lines of business. Could you not find something to say on the subject of the trade methods—foolish ones it seems to me they are, very often—of the tanners and leather dealers?

Anyone who notices and remembers will tell you that for 15 or 20 years, ever since the Woodley flush times in Quebec and the buzzing times here, when one who wanted to become a shoe manufacturer here could get "assistance" on St. James street as well as on Lemoine street, there have been over-trading and loose methods in the leather business of this province. Within the past month we have seen the result of it in failure after failure, with disastrous result.

I do not know what view you would take of the reasons for such regrettable goings on, but there is no doubt they are doing serious harm to legitimate traders and to honest, painstaking business. There are, to my mind, too many in the trade, dividing up the business. The people who make leather, as well as the people who sell it, are not particular enough whom they sell to. Credit is too cheap, at the tannery, at the warehouse, and at the bank, too. I think the bankers are just as bad at over-trading as other people.

Let us hear what you have to say. Would a "combine" in this business, if such a thing were possible to be worked, bring us any relief?

Yours,

A VEXED DEALER.

Montreal, 8th April, 1889.

FAILURES IN THE SHOE AND LEATHER TRADE.

Editor MONETARY TIMES:

SIR,—There appears to be a state of rottenness in this trade named above that calls for a few remarks. Every few years there is a cyclone among the shoe houses in the Province of Quebec, caused by indiscriminate credits and manufacturing and selling goods at less than cost.

Now there is only one cure for this state of affairs, and that is not to accept any compromise, but weed out those houses that cannot pay dollar for dollar. To say the least of it, it is a great injustice to solvent traders to have to compete with a neighbour who every few years wipes out his liabilities at 50 cents on the dollar. The principle is wrong; and the leather houses and the banks are greatly to blame for the present state of affairs. No sooner does a manufacturer fail and compromise than the leather men figure that he will be good for a few years, and they at once rush in and crowd goods on him, and the result is that it is only a year or two till they have him back on their hands again.

Until the leather men make up their minds that they will not accept a compromise, then, and not till then, will the atmosphere be clear of disasters like the present.

Toronto, April 6th, 1889.

TANNER.

RETURNING GOODS.

Editor MONETARY TIMES:

SIR,—Your article on trade methods in dry goods in this week's issue is to the point. Your Toronto Board of Trade are doubtless very clever people, but one could wish they did not take back all they say against returned goods in the last few sentences of the report. They only affirm that certainly the retailer returning goods should prepay the freight charges on the package or packages so returned.

Now, why should goods sent according to order be returned at all? And why should they be taken back by the wholesale dealer? Returning goods by retailers is a habit, and a precious bad one. No good business man cancels an order once given, nor does he return goods sent according to his order. I am happy to say there are still a great many customers on our books who never return anything. Such men deserve the best attention, and they get the best in the house, *always*; while another set return a certain portion out of every order given and executed. Our rule now with regard to returned goods is to send them back to the retailer, plus all the charges. We do not take them back at all, whether charges are paid or not.

We cannot do better for a buyer or customer than give him the goods he orders, and it is unfair to ask us to take them back, when by saving them for him we lost the sale of them to some one else. If every wholesale dry goods house would carry out the same rule, without exception, very few goods would be returned.

In the matter of dating goods forward, I think the banks are greatly to blame discounting six months' or eight months' paper. Were they to refuse notes having a longer time to run than four months, the dating ahead would be curtailed somewhat; there would be fewer in business, both wholesale and retail; consequently trade would be healthier.

I am glad to see your reference to the experiences of the Manchester merchants. I know "F. R. L." well; the others I presume are principals, buyers, and managers in the wholesale warehouses in Manchester, who are suffering from dating ahead and "returns" of goods.

STRAIGHT BUSINESS.

Montreal, 8th April, 1889.

NEW BOOKS.

The National Publishing Company, of Toronto, which changed proprietors recently, is now in the hands of Mr. John A. Taylor, who from experience and integrity is well qualified to conduct it. Mr. Taylor arranges with English authors for the use of their copyright works in the United States as well as Canada. He has also secured from Amelie Rives Chandler the right to print her book "The Witness of the Sun." Among the neatly covered volumes of his Red Letter Series of novels, we find the following: "Dolly," by Justin McCa-

thy; "A False Scent," by Mr. Alexander; "The Englishman of the Rue Cain," a high-class detective story, by the author of "A Passenger from Scotland Yard." These books are pleasant to the eye, and we are told are published at low prices.

GOODS MARKED IN PLAIN FIGURES.

Here in Indiana, writes the facetious Bill Nye, there lives at Fairmount an honest and deserving green-grocer and tradesman, whose name I did not succeed in getting. He deserves to do well. He does not prevaricate. He does not try to misrepresent. Ranged along the front of the store he exhibits vegetables of all kinds, fruit in season, butter and eggs. All look sweet and clean. Everything is neatly arranged. Hung over these articles are the price marks. Coming along the egg counter you discover a shingle on which is painted with shoe blacking:

EGGS 8 CTS.

GOOD 15 CTS.

Noticing the large number of 8-cent eggs sold during the day, we have, says Mr. Nye, cancelled our lecture date here and will go away on the afternoon train.

STOCKS IN MONTREAL.

MONTREAL, April 10th, 1889.

STOCKS.	Highest.	Lowest.	Total.	Sellers.	Buyers.	Average. 1888.
Montreal.....	230 1/2	228	323	230 1/2	228 1/2	229
Ontario.....	135	132	135	135	132 1/2	133 1/2
Peoples'.....	103	99 1/2	56	102	99 1/2	101
Molson's.....	169	166	.....	.....	.....	167 1/2
Toronto.....	225	215	.....	220	215	220
J. Cartier.....	100	94	.....	100	94	97
Merchants'.....	141	138 1/2	59	141	140	139 1/2
Commerce.....	120 1/2	119 1/2	259	120	119 1/2	119 1/2
Union.....	83	83	.....	.....	.....	83
Mon. Telegraph.....	91	89 1/2	708	89	89 1/2	89 1/2
Rich. & Ont.....	58 1/2	57 1/2	434	58	57 1/2	57 1/2
City Pass.....	210	202 1/2	.....	209	202 1/2	205 1/2
Gas ex div'd.....	198 1/2	197 1/2	512	198 1/2	198 1/2	198 1/2
C. Pacific R.R.....	51 1/2	50	125	51 1/2	51	51
N. W. Land.....	73	69	200	70	69 1/2	71 1/2

Commercial.

MONTREAL MARKETS.

MONTREAL, 10th April, 1889.

ASHES.—The market presents no new features, and quotations are just where they have been for the last three months, a most unusual thing in the trade; receipts also continue light. We quote: \$4.00 to 4.05 for first quality pots; seconds, \$3.55 to 3.60; pearls altogether nominal at about \$5.25. Stocks in store are about 650 brls. pots, 125 pearls.

BOOTS, SHOES, AND LEATHER.—We can report nothing new in these lines. The run of failures among the smaller manufacturing shoe men seems to have worked itself out, and no further disturbances are looked for. Local factories are quietly engaged in finishing up sorting orders for spring and the demand for leather is of a moderate character. Stocks are full and prices unaltered. We quote:—Spanish sole, B.A., No. 1, 21 to 22c.; ditto, No. 2, B.A., 18 to 19c.; No. 1, ordinary Spanish, 19 to 21c.; No. 2 ditto, 17 to 18c.; No. 1, China, 18 to 19c.; No. 1 slaughter, 23 to 24c.; No. 2 do. 21 to 22c.; Am. oak sole, 39 to 43c.; British oak sole, 40 to 45c.; waxed upper, light and medium, 30 to 34c.; ditto, heavy, 24 to 30c.; grained, 30 to 35c.; Scotch grained, 33 to 37c.; splits, large, 16 to 22c.; do., small, 12 to 18c.; calf-splits, 32 to 38c.; calfskins (55 to 46 lbs.), 55 to 65c.; imitation French calfskins, 70 to 80c.; russet sheepskin linings, 30 to 40c.; harness, 21 to 28c.; buffed cow, 11 to 13c.; pebbled cow, 11 to 14c.; rough, 21 to 23c.; russet and bridle, 45 to 55c.

CEMENTS, FIREBRICKS, &c.—There is quite a brisk demand for cement, several hundred brls. of Portland having been sold within the last few days at \$3; stocks are small. Orders to import are being booked at about \$2.50 *ex ship*. Bricks, \$25 to 30 per M, and stock small.