

The Annoyances of Business.

"It is aggravating to observe a party deliberately selling off your goods, when you know you will never get a cent for them," remarked a wholesale merchant the other day, as he spoke of the sale of goods at a retail store in Winnipeg. The merchant then went on and reported the story of the deal to The Commercial as follows. Douglas & Co. was the name of a business concern carrying on trade in boots and shoes, etc., at the town of Portage la Prairie, in this province. Mrs. Douglas was nominally the sole partner, though her husband, Hamilton Douglas, was the manager and apparently the head and front of the business. During last fall Douglas & Co. bought freely from Winnipeg and eastern houses. Later on a claim owing to a Winnipeg house fell due and was not met. A writ was issued covering the amount; namely, \$300. Before service of the writ, however, J. S. Douglas of Winnipeg, a brother, stepped in with a snap judgment to the amount of about \$1,000. Mrs. Douglas could not be found, and though the remaining creditors issued writs, they could not get service of them. Douglas, it is said, professed complete ignorance of the whereabouts of his wife. The stock was sold under the execution in favor of the Winnipeg brother, for 11 cents on the dollar, and was nominally purchased by one MacDonald, but it remained in the hands of Douglas. The lawyers who were acting for Douglas, and who were owners of the building occupied by Douglas & Co., came in with a claim of \$200 for one year's rent, taking goods out of the store to satisfy the claim. This claim for rent, together with the judgment of the brother, consumed the entire stock, and left the other creditors without a cent. The stock was advertised for sale at slaughter prices, with H. Douglas in charge, and later it was moved to Winnipeg, where the business is being carried on apparently under the same management. One creditor tried to issue a writ of attachment to stop the sale of the stock, and offered to give bonds to the amount of \$1,000, but the sheriff at Portage for some reason could not be induced to allow the writ to issue. Later, after the stock was all cleared out, he offered to issue the writ. The whole affair seems a scandalous transaction. Douglas is said to have done a good cash trade during the fall and winter. He bought goods to the amount of about \$5,000, upon which practically nothing was paid, and as claimed not even the rent of the store for a full year had been paid, which latter liability seems rather peculiar. The question with the creditors is, where the money went to, seeing that it did not go to lessen the liabilities, and the stock was so reduced as not to satisfy the brother's judgment. There are several features about the affair which cannot be regarded with satisfaction. The failure to reduce liabilities, the disappearance of Mrs. Douglas to avoid service and the rent transaction, etc., all point to the urgent need of some change in the law to prevent such disgraceful occurrences.

Fur Trade News.

The London correspondent of the Fur Trade Review, writing on June 12, says:—"As expected, the June sales caused very little change in prices, as bear, opossum, skunk and mink sold at about March prices. The excessively large offering of raccoon and musquash forced the articles fifteen per cent. downward. Russian sable being a very small and poor collection, and entirely void of any good skins, sold well. Chinchillas advanced to extreme high prices; some real brought twenty per cent. per dozen, and ordinary bastard sold at twenty five per cent., the article being much in request both for your market and this. The sale was

fairly well attended by the Germans, who generally constitute the main buyers—from your city I noticed buyers who secured the best lots of otters as well as martens and other fine goods. Considering the very large offering of American and Australian furs, prices must have been fairly satisfactory to the shippers. Although it is as yet too early to know positively what catch to expect of fur seals, the Northwest coast collection is, however, expected to be one-third less than the catch of 1893. Business has somewhat improved during the last month, but it is still far from satisfactory. Small Russian sable and Northwest marten scarfs are greatly used here. The weather being rainy since the beginning of May, and unsuitable for the use of Tibet's boas and trimmings, demand for same has not been very brisk of late, but same are expected to sell well during the year. Moire astrachans continue in demand with the cloak trade, also marten and sable tails for trimmings, with all imitations of the same."

The Leipzig correspondent of the Fur Trade Review, writing on June 10, says:—"Business in general has been very active during the past four weeks, the customary quiet period having followed the Easter Fair. Exporters to Russia are beginning to prepare the first shipments for the fair at Nijni Novgorod which will be held in August. As usual, considerable parcels of European foxes have been purchased for this purpose; prices paid were rather moderate. French stone marten of last year's collection has been sold very cheap, owners being ready to dispose of them because of a decline in the demand for Russia; fresh skins are a little firmer. Fitch is not as firm as during the Easter Fair, Russia, however, continues to purchase, and prices show no remarkable decline. Prime land otter skins have been purchased for plucking; lower grades have met with some demand for the Russian Chinese trade. Business in catskins has been rather dull; large parcels of skins have been dressed and assorted for retail trade. German badger in good demand, offerings small. Balkan chakals and wolves have been purchased for France at low prices. The sale of American furs was effected by the large offering at the London June sales and some large parcels of directly imported goods have remained unsold or been disposed of at low rates; parcels of skunk have been sold to German and English dealers on speculation; white skins are dyed skunk color here at present. Supplies of raccoon have been purchased for Russia and more will be required; this article will do well at the present moderate prices; in the fancy dyed skins the blue and skunk dyed are preferred, sea otter imitation is also in favor. Some of our manufacturers of seal imitations and linings are occupied on the musquash orders left by various purchasers at the Fair; some sales of raw skins have also been noted; parcels of musquash have also been taken for Russia; the same buyers also secured black musquash and this article has met with further sale for lining manufacture in Germany. There has been the usual sale of American opossum for dyeing skunk imitations. There has been very little demand for Australian opossum, as dyed skins have been at a standstill since the Easter Fair. Only limited transactions in mink and marten. Parcels of good colored American otter and some medium color have been taken for Russia; red fox has sold somewhat slowly since the fair; blue fox has been purchased for Russia at the prevailing low figures; there is no demand for lynx, and nutria sells less freely than one year ago.

The Montreal Trade Bulletin says:—"The market here is demoralized, and stocks on hand are very heavy; large stocks are also reported at Lampson's. Prices during the past season were lower than they have been for many years previous. With the large stocks that are reported to be on hand and the low prices that have been ruling, the tendency of the market for the coming season will be very doubtful."

British Columbia will Benefit by the Nicaragua Canal.

On completion of the Nicaragua Canal, freight rates between the old and new world will drop so materially that British Columbia and the entire coast country will eventually become the source of supply in lumber and wood pulp, etc., for the European markets. This is the way it is explained: It now takes a vessel several months to reach England from Vancouver around the Horn. By way of the Nicaragua Canal the passage may be made in 60 days without transshipping, while steamers can make the canal in eight days, and from the canal to England in 16 days. It is said that the Canadian Pacific railway in conjunction with a line of fast steamers, could afford to fix rates between British Columbia and England at figures corresponding with the present rates between Vancouver and San Francisco. Here before wood pulp has been mainly supplied to European markets from Austria, and the cargo transhipped five or six times in passage, and here by the aid of the Nicaragua canal, the coast would far outstrip all competitors, as the paper pulp of British Columbia and Puget Sound, made from the famous gumless spruce, is said to be superior to any pulp in the market, the same may be said of our cottonwood, used in the manufacture of fine quality of paper, as well as the wood for block paving so extensively used in the large European cities. Eastern states and Canada will benefit from the shorter distance and lower rates of the canal route, but not so materially as the Pacific coast, whose shippers will be brought in direct competition with their hitherto invulnerable rivals of the old world.—Railway Review.

Binder Twine.

There has been no advance in the price of binder twine in the United States since the one fourth cent raise made by the United States Cordage company, May 28, and at present indications are that no further advance will be made unless by reason of extraordinary demand at harvest time. The average dealer who would ordinarily rush to buy at the slightest indication of a raise, is apparently unconcerned about prices this year, and a still further advance would be likely to find him in the same state of indifference. It is not so much a question of paying one-fourth or one half cent more per pound for his twine, because the farmer will reimburse him for that outlay, but more a question of where the money is coming from to pay for what twine he is obliged to purchase. Twine runs into money pretty fast and this is a year when every dollar tied up in stock means something. Of course the dealers who were able to place their orders before quotations were advanced will be benefitted by that much per pound, but they are not numerous.

There is likely to be a shortage in the highest grade of twine, manila and pure manila, the demand for that quality being excessive, though at present quotations the medium grades of standard and standard mixed are cheaper, figured on the basis of the nominal length each grade will run to the pound. The representative of an Ohio factory was in Minneapolis recently, seeking to exchange a contract for several thousand pounds of pure manila, for the same amount of a lower grade, but his mission was unsuccessful.

Quotations on raw material have advanced somewhat during the past sixty days, which is one reason for the advance in twine.

There are rumors, which appear to be authentic, that three of the largest independent twine factories are about to be absorbed by the United States company. In fact, it is practically settled in at least one case. This will remove one of the greatest obstacles from the path of the successor to the National, and if the negotiations in the other two cases prove successful, the twine business, from the manu-