

trade of Canada. The opening of rail ways in every part of Ontario, and the introduction of the commercial travelling system has completely revolutionized it. The business men of Toronto, although few, were like the men of Issacher, able to discern the signs of the times, and with commendable foresight and a good deal of faith in the future of their city, promoted and aided the construction of the railways which at present branch out from Toronto like the spokes of a wheel, in every conceivable direction. Toronto is now the centre of the railroad system of Ontario, and its geographical position as the centre of the Province gives it advantages as a distributing centre, of which it has not been slow to take advantage.

Fifteen years ago, its purely wholesale houses might almost have been counted on the fingers of a person's hands; to-day they can only be numbered by hundreds, and it is no exaggeration to say, that Toronto now controls more than half of the entire trade of this Province. The competition between Montreal and Toronto has been long and severe, but the Queen City has displayed an amount of energy and enterprise that has brought it abreast of its wealthy and more favoured rival. Indeed so injurious to Montreal has the rivalry of this city become, that many of its leading houses have established branches here in order to protect their western trade, and in several cases, the business of the branch has increased so quickly as to make it become the head quarters instead of the parent house. As a wholesale market, Toronto offers many advantages over any city in Canada. It is easy of access from any direction, every branch of trade is fully represented by enterprising dealers and heavy, well assorted stocks. In fact, it is safe to say, that any dealer who cannot suit himself in the Toronto markets, will hardly do so on this of the Atlantic; and in no branches of trade can thus be more truly affirmed than those of Hardware and Jewelry.

#### OUR HARDWARE TRADE.

During the past few years, few if any of our wholesale trades have increased more than that of hardware. From having two houses fifteen years ago, Toronto has now five first-class hardware houses doing an exclusively wholesale business; their sales during the past year aggrega-

ting no less than \$2,500,000, or an average of half of a million dollars each. The amount of foreign hardware entered at the port of Toronto during the past year was more than one million dollars, and consisted principally of goods not manufactured in this country. The principal items in the returns are: manufactures of brass, such as tubing, bolts, wire, &c., \$23,082; similar manufactures of copper, \$25,409; band and hoop iron, \$10,149; bar iron, \$66,887; bolts, rivets, washers, &c., \$15,867; Canada plates, \$12,538; castings and cast iron pipes, \$34,016; builders' hardware, \$83,131; tinned holloware, &c., \$18,841; machines of all kinds, \$165,442; pig iron, \$22,392; sheet iron, \$49,675; skates, \$8,627; tin plates, \$47,554; tubing, \$58,036; manufacture of iron, steel, cutlery, &c., \$65,058; manufactures of lead, \$27,748; guns, \$14,865; carpenters and other tools, \$63,220; manufactures of tin, \$38,660; manufactures of metal, \$63,076.

In the matter of prices, although at the commencement of the year a steady advance was anticipated and attained, it was only for a short period; as a rule the highest quotations were reached in February, but almost without exception commenced to decline immediately after, and reached their lowest point in November, since which time they have either remained firm or slightly stiffened.

The inducements offered to hardware merchants throughout the Province, by the wholesale trade of this city are unsurpassed, especially in such lines as bar iron and shelf hardware. It is not generally known that Toronto has the largest and best stocked iron house in the Dominion of Canada, but such is the fact. In the matter of shelf hardware, which is now mostly American, this city offers special inducements to buyers, as it can be laid down here cheaper than any other point in Canada, and our dealers have always made this a special feature of their business.

In addition to the regular wholesale hardware business spoken of above, Toronto is also the seat of numerous manufactures of goods usually sold by hardware dealers, such as saws of all kinds, lead pipe, pressed tin ware, putty, shot, paints and varnishes of all kinds, &c. Many of these factories are doing a very extensive business, and have gained for themselves a more than a provincial reputation for the excellence of their manufactures.

#### OUR JEWELRY TRADE.

As far as the Province of Ontario is concerned, Toronto is without doubt the leading market for this branch of business. Fifteen years ago there was but three wholesale jewelers in this city; at present there are no less than ten firms engaged in this business, and nearly double that number of manufacturing jewelers. The aggregate trade of these ten wholesale houses for the past year is estimated at about \$400,000, while that of the manufacturing jewelers for the same time could not fall short of \$100,000, making in all a grand total for the year, of half a million of dollars. The customs returns at this port show that an aggregate of \$208,152 in value were passed during the past year, on which duties to the amount of \$52,415 were levied by the Government. The quantities and goods imported are classified as follows: clocks and clock material, \$27,897; electro plated ware \$44,022; jewelry \$84,962; watches, watch movements, &c., \$44,905; manufactures of gold and silver \$6,966.

A great many complaints are made by the trade in reference to the duty levied on watches and gold jewelry, and the general feeling seems to be that the government ought either to afford them absolute protection against smuggling, or else lower the duty on these goods and afford them protection in that way. There can be but little doubt in the mind of any person at all conversant with the trade, that large quantities of watches and valuable gold jewelry are constantly being smuggled into Canada, and that it is an absolute impossibility for any government to prevent it on account of the large value of the goods as compared with their bulk, and the long and difficult frontier that has to be guarded. This being the case it is manifestly unfair that the government should still continue to tax the honest importer who is ready and willing to pay the toll they levy in preference to smuggling, with an amount of duty which places him at a terrible disadvantage when put in competition with his more unscrupulous rivals. As we have before pointed out, it simply amounts to prohibition in several lines of goods as far as the dealer is concerned, while the government are no gainers by it. While conceding that this branch of trade should contribute its quota of the revenue, the wholesale dealers are unanimously of the