

## TARIFF CHANGES AND THE DRY GOODS TRADE.

Some of the changes in the tariff, propounded in Sir Leonard Tilley's budget speech, and published by us last week, have not met with favor among dry goods merchants, and the importers of Montreal and Toronto have sent strong deputations to remonstrate against them. These changes had reference to quilts and comforters, printed or dyed cotton, carpeting, cotton duck, wineys, and hosiery of wool, the duty on which they increased. Now the general direction which the wishes of the dry goods importers take, is that, if the Government make any changes, it should levy simply *ad valorem* duties in place of *ad valorem* and specific duties combined, for that would ensure uniformity in the rate of duty collected at all the ports. A reduction of duty on prints was asked for by the deputation, on the ground that a great variety of this article was demanded, and the imports are very large, Montreal alone last year, bringing in, it was stated, 5,929,945 yards. They would prefer to have the 20 per cent. duty continued, and ask that, in any case, the new duty of 27½, if confirmed, shall not be made collectable until March 1884. The object of the government is stated to have been to favor a cloth printing establishment about to be started at Magog, Que. But this enterprise, it is contended, is not likely to assume importance for many a day. The basis on which the print works are proposed to be started does not, besides, reconcile people to so very heavy an impost on all our imports of prints for the sake of favoring one mill. It is recommended however that the duty on dyed satteen, jeans, cambries, cantilles, silesias, casbains, wiggins, stouts, be 25 per cent. as they can be successfully and profitably made in this country under that rate of duty.

One object of the government certainly should be to frame regulations which shall be easily interpreted, so that duties may be collected at all points alike. That this is not the case now is well known. Take the item of gingham for example: The duty upon these, as charged at the Toronto Custom House and also, we believe in Montreal where there are expert examiners, is 2 cents specific per square yard and 15 per cent. *ad valorem*. We are credibly told that gingham is entered at other ports in Ontario as "dress goods," and charged 20 per cent. *ad valorem* which is an injustice to those who make their entries at the cities named. Among the recommendations of the deputation were that oilcloths of all kinds, shall pay 30 per cent *ad valorem*; two-ply and other yarns, 20 per cent. *ad valorem*, and 7½ cents per lb. specific; wineys to remain as at present; dress and costume cloth, 20 per cent *ad valorem* and 7½ cents per lb.; dress and costumes not exceeding 25 inches in width and not exceeding 4 oz. to the running yard, 20 per cent. *ad valorem*; ditto exceeding this width and weight, 20 per cent. *ad valorem* and 7½ cents per pound, provided that the specified dress goods now coming in under 20 per cent. *ad valorem*.

## PREFERENTIAL JUDGMENTS AGAIN.

The recent and somewhat unexpected failure of George H. Pedlar, of Oshawa, adds another illustration to the many already afforded of the present unsatisfactory condition of the law in this Province. The Dominion Bank is this time the fortunate creditor. This is probably owing to the fact that a friend of the debtor was on some of the Bank's paper, and when the crash came steps were taken to save this friend from loss. The Bank now turns up with a judgment for over \$16,000 under which all Pedlars' assets have been seized.

The debtor has since gone through the formality of executing an assignment for the general benefit of creditors after apparently having nothing left to assign. It is the old story over again. The Banks claim will probably be paid in full and the other creditors get nothing. It is difficult to understand how any one can defend a law that upholds such unjust preferences. Probably by the time we have passed another year with constant experience such as the above, all parties may be sufficiently disgusted with the result to insure unanimity on the part of those who desire a law for rateable distribution of assets.

—Under the heading of "Extravagant Economy" an exchange has a good hit at a common practice of buying cheap stuff, eating cheap food, building cheap houses, under the mistaken impression that we are economising. But the cheaply built chimney sets fire to the house; cheap plumbing leaves room for the fatal typhoid germ; the garment of cheap shoddy cloth or the boot of leather-board wears through in two months. How many there are who insist on buying cheap flour, having no thought of its smaller relative nutriment or its doubtful healthfulness. How many continue to buy cheap teas, adulterated groceries, spices, liquors, thinking that they save money, and deceiving themselves in so thinking. And this practice of extravagant economy extends through almost all our expenditures. "A man will buy a pair of pasteboard shoes and curse shoddy on the first wet day," says the *New England Grocer*, "but for two dollars more he could have stood in honest shoes. A man will buy a coat for five dollars that is shabby and threadbare after a brief wear, when for ten dollars he could secure a garment that would outwear a dozen shoddy coats. A friend of ours paid forty dollars for an overcoat ten years ago that was supposed to be extravagant; but he tells us that it has only cost him four dollars a year for an overcoat the past ten years and he has always worn a good coat, while the next neighbor, a very economical man, buys a ten dollar shoddy overcoat every other year." We agree with the *Grocer* that poor flour, poor wood, poor coal, poor gowns, poor meat, poor butter, poor morals—is extravagance. Shoddy would never have come, if customers for shoddy had not preceded it. Isn't it high time for us to rally around all-wool-and-a-yard-wide ideas—and insist that, as poor as we may be, small as may be our incomes, we are absolutely unable to afford pasteboard shoes, sour flour, impure spices and incendiary chimneys? Let it be settled at once for all, that the charge of the extravagance of buying poor stuff shall not be laid at our door.

—A meeting of dissatisfied shareholders of the English Loan Co. was held in London, on Monday 2nd inst. The object of the meeting was to consider the situation on behalf of all the shareholders who have refused to pay the calls on stock due last November. The dissatisfied shareholders say that the directors have no authority to levy on them for any such purpose as that for which this money is required, namely to make up the loss on Ontario Bank stock, because they never had any power to buy such stock to the amount which they did. Their rules, we are told, specified that four-fifths of their investment should be in real estate, and one-fifth only in personal property; yet in face of that, it is alleged, the old directors invested three-fifths of the capital not in real estate but in the securities of other companies. A solicitor has been chosen, who will fight out the matter in the courts.

—A motion, of which the following is the substance, was adopted, says the *Chronicle* of the 7th inst., by the city council of Quebec, respecting rates of insurance in that city: "That by the recent changes made in the distribution of the water, the present satisfactory condition of the reservoirs, the improvements lately made in the different branches of the fire organization, and the immense decrease within the last two years in the number of wooden buildings in the city, the risk of extensive conflagration is as little in Quebec as in any city of the Dominion." The Fire Committee is instructed to see the agents of the different fire insurance companies doing business in Quebec, and invite them to any test they may suggest in order to satisfy themselves of the great improvements recently effected by the corporation for the suppression of fire. We apprehend that the insurance agents and canvassers do not need to have the condition of the water works or the extent of the fire hazard in Quebec "brought before them" by the committee. They are likely to know quite as much about it as the Council, and there is no fear but that rates will be relaxed as soon as it is deemed wise to relax them. The trouble has always been the other way.

—The people of Winnipeg have been in earnest about forming a local fire insurance company. Some twenty gentlemen met on the 31st ult., at the office of Messrs. McArthur, Boyle & Campbell in that city, when Mr. McArthur announced that the North West Insurance Company had duly organized. All the legal formalities having been complied with, the company was duly formed under the Manitoba Legislative Body Act, with a capital of \$500,000 divided into 5,000 shares of \$100 each. The election of directors was then proceeded with by ballot, when the following gentlemen were declared elected: Messrs. Duncan Macarthur, Hon. A. M. Sutherland Attorney-General, E. P. Leacock, M.P.P., A. H. Whiteher, J. Mulholland, Alex. Logan, S. McIlvanie, W. W. Banning, F. T. Bradley, Colin Inkster, H. S. Westbrook, Col. W. N. Kennedy, Hon. C. P. Brown, R. D. Bathgate, James A. Smart. At the meeting of director Mr. Duncan Macarthur was elected President, and Col. W. N. Kennedy Vice-President, and Mr. G. W. Girdlestone Secretary and Manager. The requisite amount of stock having been subscribed for, and the necessary amount paid in, the manager was authorized to proceed and accept fire risks.

—Respecting the Government subsidy of \$24,000 per annum to the White Cross Line of steamships it had been surmised that the White Cross Line could undertake the service between Canada and Germany and Antwerp in the event of the Brazilian line not meeting with success in its present efforts. Here-upon the *Montreal Star* had been requested to state that this statement conveys a wrong impression; "the White Cross Line is under contract with the Government to commence a monthly service between Antwerp and Canada on May 1st next. In the summer the steamers will land their passengers at Montreal and in the winter at St. John, New Brunswick, or Halifax, at the option of the owners. The White Cross service is not conditional upon anything the Brazilian line may do or may not do."

—We learn that Mr. R. H. Hunter, who has been for some time manager in Winnipeg of the Imperial Bank of Canada, has resigned that position to assume the management of a prominent lumber firm. He will however, continue to act as local director. Mr. Hunter's successor will be, we understand, Mr. C. S. Hoare, late manager of the Ingersoll branch.