

THE HARDWARE TRADE.

There is no very new or important change to notice in this branch of trade, which perhaps more than any other maintains from year to year a steady unvarying character. The extent of business at this point, in common with all others, has been a good deal curtailed during the year, especially in the latter part of the autumn, principally owing to the small delivery of a short crop and the low prices realized. The decrease in the imports all over the Province will be marked, and, it is said, when published, will fall short of any preceding year for ten years. The large stocks on hand from last season, with the declining consumption, in some measure accounts for this, and there is no doubt that stocks now both in first and second hands have seldom or never been as light. Notwithstanding, however, a greatly circumscribed trade, the business of the year has been satisfactory. Dealers have pursued a very cautious policy in granting credit, and we question if ever in the history of the trade the same amount of goods has been sold and so little loss incurred. There is, of course, a good deal of the profits yet in the country, but so far as is at present apparent there is every probability of a good result from the year's business.

The advance in prices of American hardware, such as furnishing goods, &c., in consequence of the excited currency, has not affected prices on this side of the lake, except perhaps to favour the buyer somewhat. Amounts bought on time in the early part of the year have been paid for when Exchange had declined from twenty to twenty-five per cent. Our dealers have generally had the advantage, and can afford to be liberal with their customers.

In pig-iron prices for the greater part of the year were very low, and with a great deal of competition in the trade little or nothing has been made on this most important staple. Later and towards the fall the demand improved, which, with a considerable decrease in importations, caused a rise from \$19 @ \$20 to \$24 per ton for favourite brands. Bar-iron has not varied in price, affording, however, very little to dealers over cost and charges. Toward the close, with high rates in Britain, prices were somewhat improved, but are not higher than at this time last year. In shelf and heavy hardware there has been but little variation. If anything rates are easier, as they are also for tin, Canada plates, &c. In nails no profit has been made, the great competition in Montreal,

and between that city and this, resulting in giving consumers nails ready made absolutely cheaper than the iron from which they are made could be bought.

The stocks are low all over the country, and the movement of the crop, which cannot now be much longer delayed, must create considerable activity during the winter and spring. Our market continues to afford good facilities for all Western traders, and we are glad to know, as to prices and terms, our dealers continue to afford the best advantages.

We are glad to notice that the long-established and highly respectable business of the late John Harrington, has been purchased by Messrs. Lyman & Savage, relatives of the Montreal firm of the same name. With some considerable experience got in the best establishments, with ample means and a determination to make use of the best available facilities, we have no doubt they will be an important contribution to the trade of the city.

Messrs. Rice Lewis & Son contemplate a considerable extension of their already prosperous business, and have purchased the premises adjoining theirs in King-street, which they will fill with a select and well-assorted stock of lighter hardware and fancy goods.

Messrs. Thos. Haworth & Co., Ridout Bros. & Co., Harris, Evans & Co., P. Paterson & Son, E. Bryson & Co., M. & L. Samuels, A. Dixon & Son, Thomson & Burns, and Wm. Hewitt, continue to have the best assortment of goods, which they are always ready to offer on the most advantageous terms.

The retail trade is well represented by Messrs. J. B. Ryan, W. Badenach, John Mead, James Foster, and Richey & Harris, the latter dealing extensively in house furnishing goods, rock oil, &c.

THE DRUG TRADE.

Sales are reported to have been a full average during the past year, and payments during the first ten months were rather more full and prompt than usual.

During the months of November and December, the general scarcity of money has been felt, causing remittances to be delayed and to be smaller in amount than they should have been; but, taking the year as a whole, collections were pretty good, and at the close, the total amount of indebtedness was not greater than in the corresponding period of 1861.

The year has been marked by great fluctuations in the prices of nearly every staple drug, the general tendency being to an advance from the low rates current at the beginning of the season.