

tario has openly put its provisions and penalties at defiance.

But when we reach commercial questions the eccentricities of Canadian legislation, both Dominion and local reach their most dangerous forms. It is the avowed policy of the present Dominion Government to bind as closely together as possible Canadian trade interests, and in its railway and tariff policy it does not scruple at great injustice in the distribution of benefits and burdens to carry out its binding aims. Yet in the question of relationship of debtor and creditor, one which affects trade more than all others, it stands idly by and refuses to take any action. The want of an Act which will compel the equal distribution of the assets of insolvent estates, is at present doing incalculable injury to the credit of commercial Canada in Europe and the United States, and is a dead load for the trade interests in the Dominion to carry; yet the central government at Ottawa, the only one with the power to give relief in the matter resolutely avoids the question, and closes the present session of Parliament without even a promise to take the question up. Here the futility of provincial legislatures attempting the work of the Dominion Parliament is made apparent. Ontario has its Creditor's Relief Act, and a similar one is called for in Manitoba. The Council of the Northwest Territories have put debtors practically beyond the reach of their creditors, and our hopeful Manitoba Legislature have passed an Exemption Act, which makes it optional to a debtor whether he pays his debts or not, for by its provisions he must be a man of considerable loose means before he can be forced.

Altogether there is being woven a sweet network of local legislation in the provinces and territories, the effect of which will be to set the trading communities of the different provinces at sixes and sevens, and inaugurate a system of grab for the local creditor to the loss of the distant one, where the broad limits of exemption do not reach. And yet all this local legislation is not framed and put in force for debt evasion purposes, some of it being framed with the very best intentions. But it all goes to prove how useless it is for a local government to attempt to grapple with the great question of the relationship of debtor and creditor. The best that can be accomplished is to afford a little local relief, and this must in most

cases be secured at the expense of the distant creditor. It is the work of the Dominion Government beyond question, and until it is undertaken by the one in power the charge of legislative indolence lies at their door. If the one now in power would carry out its own avowed policy commercial Canada would not now be in the helpless position it is in, or be compelled to go round to local legislatures and beg of them to do some patching up which can only at best be a miserable substitute for the great work which is required and should be undertaken at Ottawa. The neglect of this work furnishes another strong argument to those who assert that Canada with the great country under its control is like the little boy with his father's boots, the inside of which his little feet and legs could wander around, but to walk with them was a matter impossible.

SENSATIONAL WAR NEWS.

A small item in the last issue of THE COMMERCIAL regarding clothes-line telegrams has evidently seriously annoyed our local contemporary, the *Sun*, and worked our other evening contemporary, the *Times*, into a foaming rage. That an item of less than twenty lines should have caused such a fuss is *prima facie* evidence that it has struck a tender spot or two somewhere.

We shall first turn our attention to the *Sun* and its statement about our small article. That journal has as yet failed to show that any press dispatch, direct from the front reached Winnipeg during the time we specified, but we admit that it received a dispatch (and not a regular press dispatch, as is admitted in its own columns,) from Clarke's Crossing, which it published, as did the *Times*, in a Sunday edition. If we are to admit that the garbage flying from Clarke's Crossing was news from the front, there would be some argument in what the *Sun* has said, but for several days after the fight at Fish Creek, Clarke's Crossing was practically as far severed from the front and scene of action as Portage la Prairie and Brandon, and the messages received during these several days, and particularly the one on the strength of which the *Sun* and *Times* published a Sunday edition, were of such an unreliable nature, when they referred to anything at the front, as to provoke only a smile of incredulity from those who read them in print. We

regret that the *Sun's* enterprise (of which it has a commendable share) should for once have got ahead of its good judgment, for notwithstanding its talk about sleeping sentinels, the *Free Press* would not publish a Sunday edition on the strength of the Clarke's Crossing telegram referred to, although a force of its employees were on hand all day to do so if necessary, and the fact that said telegram has since been shown to contain unmitigated hosh, shows the good judgment of its managers.

But a word or two with our friend the *Times*, which seems to have entrusted the management of its case with THE COMMERCIAL to its fighting or sporting editor, and that worthy has managed to mix the war interests of his journal with the late McKeown slugging match at Neche, the straight tip regarding which he no doubt possessed at the time of writing his challenge headed "Put up or shut up". But this cuttle fish policy of stirring up the mud to blind onlookers is far from reaching desired results, and a fixed up stirring of conditions in a so-called challenge, not one of which condition calls in question the statements made in our last issue, have not raised dust enough to cover up the retreat of the *Times* from the pit of public execration in which it now wallows. A journal which manufactured out of printer's ink a huge battle in Egypt, slaying the followers of Arabi Pasha in thousands, and capturing fortifications with pure editorial gas, finds no difficulty in transferring its field of operations to the Canadian Northwest, except that the few who trouble themselves to read its rubbish, are better able to judge of its absurdity on matters nearer home. The defeat of our brave troops at Fish Creek, which it manufactured for its edition of April 25th, and detailed with an apparent malicious satisfaction, which showed that the wish was father to the thought, like most others of its undertakings, has since turned out to be a piece of unpleasant romance, and in fact so has nine-tenths of the rubbish it has dished up of late as telegraphic news from the front. We notice, however, that the *Times* has adopted two new headings since our last issue, one "From Clarke's Crossing" and the other "Learned in the city" which subtracted from its former alleged telegraphic reports, will save its readers from a pile of former tortures, and perhaps save the reputation of their war correspondent by making him responsible for a little less of the trash which never passes through his hands. There is hope even the *Times*

"For while the lamp holds on to burn
The greatest sinner may return."