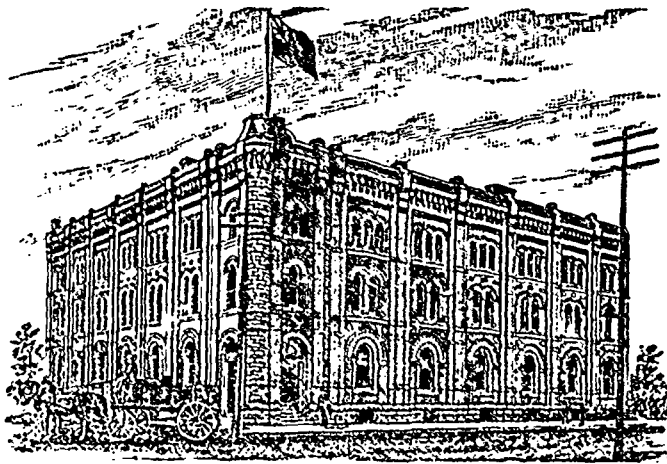


GOODS SOLD TO THE
TRADE ONLY.



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TRADE ONLY.

G. F. & J. GALT,
DIRECT IMPORTERS
TEAS, SUGARS, WINES, LIQUORS and GENERAL GROCERIES
CORNER PRINCESS AND BANNATYNE STREETS, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of *The Commercial* :

Sir,—Knowing that you have always been ready to champion the cause of those who demand justice, I make bold to call your attention to some of the unbusiness like, childish and unfair, if not dishonest actions on the part of Custom House officials in Winnipeg, to which business men have from time to time submit, without hope of redress.

I am, and have been for the past eight years quite a heavy importer, and during that period have passed many thousands of dollars worth of dutiable imports at the ports of Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg. During all these years neither myself nor my agents have had the slightest trouble with the Customs authorities at the two first named ports. But since I made the first entry at the port of Winnipeg five years ago, I have been annoyed, badgered and hounded like a criminal by a lot of ignorant and incompetent individuals filling the position of inspector and appraiser, men I suppose the Dominion Government find on their hands, and for whom they must provide bread and butter no matter what their qualifications or lack of qualifications may be: men who are prepared to resort to any trick, no matter how unscrupulous, to secure a share of the spoils, which our iniquitous Customs laws allow them out of seizures made, and who by those same laws are guaranteed immunity from punishment for any blunder they may commit in making such seizures, no matter how much injury the blunder may inflict on the importer whose goods are seized.

I have not up to this time lost any goods by seizure or been compelled to contribute anything to the gain of this knot of hungry official wolves, although it is not for lack of effort on their part to compel me so to do. I have, however, been systematically robbed by being compelled to pay duty on figures far above those of my invoice prices, and on every occasion on the valuation of an appraiser, who knows as much about the goods I import (jewelry, clocks, etc.) as a kitten knows about its grandfather; and while this extortion was being practised on myself and other importers in Winnipeg, the same class of goods were being

admitted from the same manufacturers at the valuations in my original invoices at Montreal, Toronto and other ports of the Dominion.

When I was first imposed upon by Winnipeg Customs officials I telegraphed the Honorable Minister of Customs, and subsequently wrote him at length fully explaining the position of affairs, but could get no satisfactory answer. I made a visit to Ottawa and had an interview with him in which I received plenty of promises, and on a second and third visit during two years, I received similar promises, none of which were fulfilled. I finally told the Honorable gentleman his word and promise were of no value, and left him in disgust.

My dealings through the Winnipeg Custom House have been very limited during the past two years, most of my imports having been passed at Montreal and Toronto, and everything went smoothly with me. I began to think that trouble at this port was over for good; but I was awakened from this belief recently, when my broker informed me that on October 7th and 11th thirteen out of fifteen consignments of goods had been seized or detained by the Customs authorities. Since then I have been vainly trying to find out the cause of detention, and letters of mine of the 16th and 23rd asking the cause are still unanswered.

It is now about two years since Appraiser Clarke seized a similar lot of packages, but on that occasion he condescended to inform me that they were seized for undervaluation, as they were invoiced at about one-fourth of their proper valuation. After a delay of over a month my goods were released as not being undervalued, but when I received them they were short over eighty dollars, according to the appraiser's valuation, the missing goods being rolled plate chains and lockets, which were lost or stolen while in the custody of the Customs authorities. Of course I had not only to suffer the loss from detention, but also that of the goods missing, and I have no means of recovering the price of the goods lost or stolen.

Some time ago this same Mr. Clarke tried to stop me from passing a lot of gilt rings, which are made for auction purposes, marked 18k, worth about \$6 a gross. His alleged reason for so trying was, that his smart son had purchased

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W. F. DOLL.

one of this class of rings at an auction, paying \$3 for it and securing a great bargain. Of course the competent appraiser believed he was right in measuring the value of those rings by the clever purchase at a snide auction.

But your readers may think I am partial in bestowing all my attentions on Appraiser Clarke. A higher official than he, namely, Customs Inspector Young, is equally as keen on the hunt for private money, and shows either an absence of conscience or an unpardonable ignorance in his efforts to secure the "blood money." He is at present defendant in a suit for seizing a man's goods as smuggled, whereas nine-tenths of the seized goods are of Canadian manufacture, and the balance were purchased from a Canadian duty paid. He has a very useful henchman in Deputy Collector Thomson, who can economize the truth with any man in Canada, but who can slink away very quietly when a wager of \$25 to be given to the General Hospital is put up on the truth or falsehood of his statements being proven.

But it is useless to follow this subject further. Your readers can see from what I have already written the uncomfortable position a man is placed in, who is at the mercy of a blundering and incompetent, if not dishonest official; for the present system of reward for seizures is a premium on dishonesty to unscrupulous men. Such, however, is the position the importers of this city are in at present.

Apologising for using so much of your space, I am, etc.,

W. F. DOLL,
433 & 435 Main St., Winnipeg

Crops and Prices.

The total corn crop for each of the past eleven years, as calculated by the United States Department of Agriculture, shows the astonishing feature that the total farm value of a crop is not reduced by a reduction in the yield, but on the contrary, the aggregate value is greater than when the yield is excessive.

The corn crop of 1881 was the smallest that has been produced in that country since 1871, but its home value was greater than any crop of the past decade, with the single exception of the year following, when prices were still high. —*Chicago Daily Business*