

by the employees of a calendar clock, (specially imported by Charles McLeod for the purpose) and an office chair. The presentation was accompanied by an address, which elicited a feeling reply from the firm. Both were so admirable in their tone that we publish them in full:—

ADDRESS.—We, your men, have gathered around you again for the purpose (if extending to you our best wishes, and a feeling of gratitude welling up within us, for the very liberal and honest way in which you have dealt with us all through these years we have been associated with you. We feel it a pleasure at this time to gather here and present to you these small gifts, feeling as we do, that perfect harmony exists between you and your employees, and would ask you to accept these as tokens of gratitude from us for the very fair and honest way in which you have dealt with us. We now present you with an office chair and clock, carrying with them, as we feel sure they do, the best wishes of us all.

REPLY.—Accept our heartfelt thanks for these beautiful presents. They prove to us that we have the good-will and good-feeling of our employees, without which it is impossible to successfully conduct any business. We assure you that we have your welfare at heart, and are highly pleased to see so many of you making homes for yourselves which you own and have built out of your earnings. We believe that the proportion of mechanics who own property is greater in Amherst than any place in the Dominion. It is not necessary for us to tell you that we work hard ourselves, and keep ourselves informed of all that is going on in our line of business, and have the reputation of being a live firm; and we assure you it is necessary to be so, in order to furnish employment for so many. We also have the reputation of doing good work. But we are not satisfied yet. We want this reputation so well established that the public can and will send us their orders without enquiry as to price or quality, feeling and knowing that they will get a good article at a reasonable price. To gain this end we especially need the co-operation of our employees, and we assure you that if you further help us in this matter, you shall share in the prosperity it will bring. The past year has been a prosperous one, and the present looks promising. In conclusion, we thank you again for these beautiful presents and the interest you take in the business, and wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year.

A Robb & Sons, Amherst, N. S., sent out from their siding a few days ago, a car loaded with one of their celebrated Monarch steam boilers for Cariboo Mines. Messrs. Robb, although they have been in the boiler business but a short time, are establishing a reputation for their goods which is quite in keeping with their past record.

COMMERCIAL.

The recent heavy snow falls have interrupted traffic, and blocked the country roads, so that the markets have been quiet in tone, and no activity has been developed in any line of business. Consequently, in most departments trade has been on the slow side, and practically featureless. The temper as to the future is not despondent, nor is it buoyant,—in fact, the general opinion inclines towards a cautious view of the situation. As a rule, payments are made so far with promptness, but some anxiety is expressed as to the obligations that will mature in this and the two following months, especially in the Western portion of the Dominion. The *Winnipeg Commercial* says:—"The work of collecting wholesale trade reports has been a very unpleasant one. The replies to enquiries about the state of trade, if condensed into one reply, would be a loud and not very pleasant growl. Nobody is satisfied with the state of affairs, and the dissatisfaction is all the deeper on account of the cause, for it being an artificial and not a natural one. Trade is thoroughly demoralized, and must remain more or less so until the country can by some means get its grain crop to market, and only those who have business connections over the Province can realize to what an extent this demoralization exists, and how paralyzing are its effects. Since our last report appeared, some merchants have awakened a little from the business stupor the first shock of the grain car famine brought on, and are realizing that supplies of actual necessities must be kept up. This has in a small way improved matters in these lines, but the state is still a small one indeed. In season lines there is an utter absence of the straggling calls for odds and ends for immediate wants, which were common in January of former years, and even in ordering from spring goods samples retailers are slow and irresolute under the present circumstances, and show by the caution they exercise, that the hopeful feelings they had in the opening of winter have given place for those of supreme disgust over a season's business spoiled. The collection returns from both city and country are also very discouraging, and retailers who have heretofore shown every promptitude in payments are being compelled to ask favors from their wholesalers. The only encouraging symptoms are that disgust and disappointment are in no way mixed with despair, for it is plain to any person, who will make the most casual investigation, that a speedy marketing of the crop would quickly remove every pressure now felt."

A city daily contemporary has recently published a series of articles, giving statistics of our fishery catch. They show that our fishermen in 1887 caught fish of various kinds to the value of over \$8,000,000. This is about the average catch that has been made during the past ten or twelve years. The catch of lobsters was larger than that for 1886, but less than that for the preceding year. Still, it is worthy of note that it takes more of these crustaceans to fill a can than it did a few years since. Our lobstermen are being rapidly fished out. No large lobsters now exist on our coast and soon—despite their remarkable fecundity—the probability is, that if the most stringent measures are not promptly taken for their protection, the lobster will become as extinct a species as the auk now is. It is useless for the Government to decree that lobsters, under a certain size, shall not be taken,

or that in certain weeks—which, by the way, does not cover their breeding season—it shall be illegal to capture them. It is impossible to have an intelligent Government official at every one of the 250 lobster-canning establishments that exist in Nova Scotia alone; and the idea of depending on the natives living in the vicinity of these places who live by the cash that they get for what they catch is manifestly absurd. The only effectual remedy is to absolutely prohibit the taking of lobsters for the purpose of canning, for, say, five or seven years. After that, canning lobsters may be permitted for one or two years, with intermitting periods of prohibition. Thus, and thus only, our lobster fisheries may be placed on a permanent footing.

The following are the Assignments and Business Changes in this Province during the past week:—A. E. Sully, organ manufacturer, Bridgetown, admitted E. P. Raymond as partner, under the name of Acadia Organ Manfg. Co.; Wesley O. Kaizer, grocer, Halifax, assigned to James Watson; Theakston, Angwin & Co., W. & R. hardware, Halifax, dissolved, Robt. Theakston retired, business continued by remaining partners under old name.

Dry Goods.—As the stormy weather has interfered both with receipts and deliveries, the dry goods has made but little progress since our last report, and the market has maintained a quiet tone throughout. Spring orders have not assumed large proportions, and country merchants do not show any undue haste to stock up. In general, the situation may be summed up as unchanged, but many merchants seem to think it advisable to go slow for the present.

IRON, HARDWARE AND METALS.—This trade, while not active, has a firm tone in every quarter, and the prospect promises at least a fair trade. Prices are firmly sustained. In Glasgow warrants have lost 3d., and now stand at 41s. 1d. Pig-iron has been quiet, but business has been confined to small lots. There has been a fair demand for finished iron and for tin plates and Canada plates. Tin has been unchanged, but Chili bars are rather weaker. Late London cables are:—Spot tin £166 10s., three months futures £144, market quiet; G. O. B. Chili bars £75 15s.; soft Spanish lead, £14 10s.; do English do, £14 15s.; best selected copper, £80. The *Glasgow Herald* has the following:—"With reference to the remark of a London contemporary as to the action of the syndicate, and as to its bearing on the interests of the consumers, it is explained that a leading member of this syndicate, M. Secretan, is a very large consumer, taking, it is said, over 2,400 tons of copper annually, and it may be concluded that he will not do anything very antagonistic for long to the interests of his own class. The Tharsis company are not likely to enter into any such combination as has been hinted at; but there is no doubt that the other Spanish companies are favorable to the proposal, and for some time it has been suspected here that those having charge of the operation, finding that the Tharsis directors will not meet their views, are adopting other methods for securing the control of the company. That seems to be the only explanation of the large quantity of Tharsis stock that is being taken from the Glasgow market for France."

BREADSTUFFS.—The local flour market has remained dull. Owing to the difficulty of guaranteeing deliveries it is almost impossible to effect sales. Beerbohm's cable says:—"Cargoes off coast, wheat, slow; corn, nothing offering. Cargoes on passage and for shipment, wheat, slow; corn, firm. California wheat, promptly to be shipped, 34s.; do nearly due, 33s. 6d. French country markets firm. Liverpool wheat and corn, spot, slow. Wheat and flour in Paris rather easier." The *Mark Lane Express*, in its weekly review of the grain trade, says:—"English wheat is in restricted demand. Flour is depressed under increased receipts of foreign production. The importations of foreign wheat have decreased, but prices continue lower in consequence of the enormous supplies of American flour. The increasing output of the American mills now form the dominant factor in the world's breadstuffs markets. Corn is in limited supply, but prices have not varied. American new crop, which is being offered at 24s. 6d. ex-ship, is found to be of excellent quality and sound." In Chicago the wheat market has ruled weak and firm by spurts. On the break some parties bought believing in a rally on general principles, but we fail to see much room to expect an advance with such discouraging advices from over the sea. Norve may work for a while, but a decline is bound to come before long, and holders appear more likely to stand in for a loss than a gain.

PROVISIONS.—In the local markets provisions have been quiet, the demand being only for small lots, but prices have ruled firm. Some business has been done in lard at steady prices. The hog market has been quiet, the demand being slow. The Liverpool provision market was quiet and steady, except tallow, which declined 3d. to 24s. 9d. Pork closed there at 67s. 6d., lard at 38s. 6d., and bacon at 39s. to 41s. In Chicago the pork market has improved decidedly and has steadily advanced. Late quotations are \$14.35 March, and \$14.50 May. Lard there has been firm and moved up 2½c. to 5c., being at last quotations \$7 42½ for March, and \$7 52½ for May. Green and sweet pickled hams were unchanged.

BUTTER.—The butter market has continued to be very quiet, actual business accomplished being confined to the local trade. There has been a good enquiry in the West for jobbing lots of choice creamery and dairy butter, mainly, it is understood, on English account. The stock in first hands throughout Canada is believed to be relatively very light, and prices will doubtless be held firmly to the end of the season.

CHEESE.—The local market is quiet and no business of importance has been transacted in this line. Reports from Liverpool, G. B., show the market there to have been unchanged at 60s. 6d., and private advices thence confirm the steadiness of prices. In the United States the prospects for an advance are not encouraging, and holders will do well if they pull through without loss. No improvement can be reasonably expected before the beginning of March, and then we will be upon the threshold of a new season. A serious probability exists that parties who bought cheese at top figures in August and later will stand in to lose heavily by their speculations.