

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, APRIL 18, 1896.

THE QUARTER'S MERCANTILE WRECKS.

The heavy list of failures in the United States and Canada for the first quarter of 1896 as noted in The Commercial last week, does not show much encouragement as to the talked of return of good times. In the United States, as reported by Bradstreet's, there were 4512 mercantile failures during the past three months, as compared with 3,812 for the corresponding period of 1895. The total liabilities of these failures foot up to \$32,513,926, compared with \$16,910,448 last year. This is the heaviest record of failures ever reported for a like period of any previous year, both as to number and extent of liabilities.

In Canada, taking the country as a whole, the record is also a bad one. The failures numbered 781, compared with 581 last year. Liabilities \$5,753,586, compared with \$1,253,625 last year. Assets \$2,315,491, compared with \$1,890,273 last year. By provinces, the record for Canada is as follows, as to the number of failures:

Province.	1896.	1895.
Ontario	858	270
Quebec	311	191
New Brunswick	21	24
Nova Scotia	88	88
Prince Edward Island	7	5
Manitoba	10	19
The Territories	10	5
British Columbia	28	83
Total, Canada	781	581

The above shows that Ontario and Quebec are accountable for the increase in failures Manitoba makes the best showing of any division, the number of failures being only about half of last year. Owing to the heavy Garland failure at Portage la Prairie, the liabilities in Manitoba are heavier than last year, notwithstanding that the list of failures is much smaller. The following shows the assets, by provinces, for the first three months of the past two years.

Province.	1896.	1895.
Ontario	\$830,654	\$890,677
Quebec	890,600	488,850
New Brunswick	57,180	103,880
Nova Scotia	83,280	117,870
Prince Edward Island ..	12,868	35,000
Manitoba	98,650	81,146
The Territories	20,687	18,800
British Columbia	351,575	160,050

The following shows the liabilities for three months of two years, by provinces:

Province.	1896.	1895.
Ontario	\$1,976,487	\$2,107,994
Quebec	2,624,980	1,210,932
New Brunswick	180,690	192,779
Nova Scotia	188,200	245,150
Prince Edward Island ..	21,568	60,200
Manitoba	175,000	159,971
The Territories	58,675	83,700
British Columbia	577,986	247,899

It will be noticed that while Ontario had 83 more failures than last year, the total liabilities are smaller in 1896 than in 1895.

Newfoundland had 4 failures, compared with 29 for the first three months of 1895.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE COMMERCIAL is quoted more freely by papers all over Canada than is any other paper published in the West. Our exchanges are welcome to use any matter in these columns, but they are kindly requested to give proper credit for the same. The Eastern dailies usually give this credit, but a few provincial papers take original articles almost weekly from The Commercial, and never seem to think of giving any credit for it. This is very dishonorable to the parties who practice it. Sometimes a proper credit for clipped matter may be left off by an oversight or error of the printer, but an editor who had a true sense of honor would feel grieved over such an occurrence. We do not look for credit from our exchanges, in copying little news paragraphs from our columns, such as may have appeared in other papers or are current at the time. When editorial matter or market reports are appropriated, however, we naturally look for fair credit for the same.

A MOVEMENT is on foot at Montreal to induce the government to relax the coasting regulations so as to permit United States vessels to carry grain from Fort William and Port Arthur to Montreal or other lower Canadian ports. At present United States boats can carry traffic from Canadian to United States ports, but they are not allowed to handle traffic from one Canadian port to another port in this country. In the same way Canadian vessels can carry goods from a United States port to a Canadian port but not to another United States port. The object in asking for this change is to increase the quantity of Manitoba wheat handled for export via Montreal. The bulk of the export new goes out via Buffalo and New York. This is to some extent due to the scarcity of Canadian shipping on the upper lakes. There is not a sufficient tonnage available to handle a large portion of the crop, and consequently United States boats have to be secured to handle the trade, and they can only land their cargoes at United States ports. Montreal is anxious, of course, to have the Manitoba wheat crop handled at that port, hence the move to have the coasting regulations relaxed. We do not know that such a change in the regulations would make much difference to western shippers, as they will export their grain by the cheapest route whether that be Montreal or New York. Montreal, however, would be benefitted by any large increase in the traffic at that port. Owners of Canadian shipping, on the other hand, would no doubt be opposed to such a concession to United States shipping, unless the same privileges could be secured for Canadian shipper from the United States.

It is reported that when the Manitoba legislature meets, on April 16, no action will be taken on the school question, and that the house will simply meet to prorogue. Some exception may be taken to the wisdom of this policy. Now that the conference between the Dominion and provincial ministers is over and no settlement of the question accomplished, it might be a wise thing for Manitoba to take some independent action in this matter, on the lines proposed by the representatives

of the province at the recent conference with representatives of the Dominion. The argument in favor of such action is this: The remedial bill will not be passed this session, this much seems certain, and the conflict will thus be transferred to the hustings and the polls. It would certainly place Manitoba in a better position in the coming contest were it known that the provincial legislature had taken action to remove the grievances of the minority, to some extent at least. The proposition made by the Manitoba members at the conference was a very fair one. Why not proceed to put this into effect, so far as Manitoba legislation can do it? Such action would surely have a favorable influence on Manitoba's case in the elections which will soon be upon us. It is the duty of the provincial government to do everything in its power to remove cause for dissatisfaction quite regardless of the remedial bill or any other proposed federal action. Especially is this the case now, with the fight soon to be transferred from parliament to the people.

THE plan of driving out or shipping criminals or undesirable persons from one place to another is one of the most absurd customs which is practised by civic authorities. Recently a very undesirable character, belonging to the class we may say of desperate criminals, was shipped from Winnipeg to an eastern city. A few days later two females were released from prosecution on condition that they would leave the city, and one of these was re-arrested because she did not fulfill her promise. This is a custom which is followed by many other towns and cities as well as Winnipeg, and it is, to say the least, a peculiar way of dealing with such cases. A city does not gain anything by such a practice, where the custom is followed by other corporations, as others are forced to come here by being driven out of other places. Besides this, a higher motive should be followed in endeavoring to suppress crime. Driving criminals from one place to another is an injury to the country as a whole. A national and not a selfish local idea should govern the dealing with criminals or undesirable persons. It is an injury to the state to have such a custom perpetuated, and therefore it is an injury to individual towns and cities of the state. The Commercial would like to see the custom prohibited by federal legislation, if practical to apply such remedy.

Fur Trade Matters.

The New York Fur Trade Review says: "Considering the prevailing conditions, and the magnitude of the offerings, the results of the London March sales were better than was anticipated by shippers of American furs and they are indicative of improving conditions. An enlarged consumption of American furs at home, which we think will be noted this year, will materially advance the popularity of furs in general in consequence of the intrinsic value of the various articles; the favorable results of sales, just prior to the opening of the season, are especially gratifying and encouraging."

A telegram from Ottawa says that it has been decided by the government to give special assistance towards the establishment of creameries in the territories as a means of encouraging immigration.