

Familiar as all are with the great productivity of our soil, we scarcely fully realize that underlying this great wheat belt we have, in the opinion of such geologists and mineralogists as Dr. Dawson and others fifteen thousand miles of good lignite in the country drained by the Souris River, one of the southern affluents of the Assinaboine. It is also stated that there are 150,000,000 tons of coal in a workable condition near Medicine Hat. That in Lake Winnipeg there is iron enough for our wants for the next hundred years; and on Lakes Winnipegosis and Manitoba salt enough to supply Canada from Lake Superior to the Pacific for a century. All this, without mentioning our timber, marbles, limestones, pottery clays, sandstones, gypsum, asphaltum and petroleum. It has begun to dawn upon us that to avail ourselves of these blessings we must have the cheap transportation which only water affords, and it is well to remember that we have waterways of infinite commercial and manufacturing value, the neglect of which would be an indication of folly and presage of commercial disaster.

JOHN SCHULTZ.

Winnipeg, Dec. 15, 1887.

JONES VERSUS BROWN.

BY AN UN-COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.

I sing the joyous salesman "on the road;"
The hope of wholesale men, the dread of those
Poor country merchants with a weary load
Of last year's muslins, tweeds, hats, woollens,
hose

And fashion's fabrics—When Jones tunes his
muse,
They can't refuse.

In vain the poor retailer shakes his head,
Pleads poverty—plethora—prior claims;
"Come see my samples," quoth the salesman,
dead

To all such pleas and up to sinful games.
He knows that such excuses are "no go,"
Brown won't say "No,"

"Ours is the leading house;" "our goods are
right;"

"Your stock is incomplete without our wares;"
"I have a line of tweeds to show to-night
That knocks the spots off any one who dares
Compete beside us."—In so keen a tilt
Brown needs must wilt.

"I offer you, besides, a turn in stuffs,
In novel dress goods, patterns fresh and fair,
Diagonals, stripes, cashmeres, plushes, tufts,
Mantle-cloths—you can sell'em anywhere,
In fact, they sell themselves, to all effect."
(Brown's hair 's erect!)

"Your neighbor wants them.—All I've got
to do"

—Thus does the drummer bull-doze timid
Brown—

"Is, step across the road, and then you'll rue
The day these splendid samples struck your
town

And you refused them! Do you see the
point?"

Brown says, "Aroynt!

Thou cunning tempter, I would fain agree;
But see, my laden shelves, my bill-book grim
With stern BILLS PAYABLE, due A. & B.;
C. Brothers; D. & Co.—My eyes grow dim
When of their year-long lenity I think."
Jones tips a wink

And thus resumes: "My friend, you don't
perceive

The quick turn-over that our goods will bring;
They fetch the public.—Yea, as hot cakes
leave

Hotel-plates when the railway bell doth ring.
So will these leave your counters, and cash fill
Your empty till."

Relentless Jones! he notes the wavering air,
The hopeful sparkle—the despondent sigh,
And, with caressing tone and tactful care,
Another arrow from his bow lets fly,
Which, since no other quick resource remains,
His wink explains.

"Now, Mister Brown, you can't afford to be
Without these leading lines; they'll help you
sell

Your other stuff, that "A," "B," "C," and
"D"

Have stocked you with, so faithfully and well;
I'll tell you what I'll do; Now, "on the dead"
I'll date ahead.

Our terms are four months prompt to every-
body,

And we give value, every time, you bet,
But, just to help you out (I like to study
A man's good, when he's so afraid of debt)
I'll make this parcel four months 1st of May,
We're now at New Year's.—Don't give me
away,"

Brown whispers "Stay."

ARE YOU INSURED?

BY A PRACTICAL UNDERWRITER.

This very pertinent question is often to be found in a conspicuous place on invoices sent by wholesale merchants to their country customers. We fear however, that in many cases very little attention is given to it. The person who buys goods on credit is morally bound to keep such goods well insured. It is to his own interest as well as to that of his creditors, that he shall not neglect to secure them as well as himself against loss by fire, which may happen at a time when least expected,

The present stringency in the money market is very naturally causing some anxiety in commercial circles, hence the need of leaving nothing undone, which may tend to inspire confidence. The farmers' anticipations of a more than average crop of cereals have not been realized, and the prices obtained for grain have not lessened the burden of anxiety resting upon the minds of such of them as had to meet various money obligations from the proceeds of their crops. The long-credit system is still far too prevalent among country storekeepers, and farmers are among their principal debtors. The farmer is accustomed to getting credit; so long as grain is low he "feels poor," and squirms when asked to pay up. But he ought to be asked and urged regularly, and so ought every man who has bought on credit. If a store-keeper does not collect his outstandings and look after his bills payable, his credit will assuredly suffer.

One of the very first things to do at this time of the year is to take stock carefully. In doing so all shelf-worn and unsalable goods should be set apart, marked down and sold without reserve. The longer such goods are kept the less salable they become. Stock having been taken, the next

step is to see that the goods are kept insured in reliable companies to, at least, two-thirds, or say three-fourths of their cash value. Nothing will tell more favorably upon a country merchant's credit, in the minds of those from whom he buys his goods, than the knowledge that his merchandise is fully insured. It is but reasonable however, that insurance companies be particular as to the limit of the amount of insurance a person carries, as compared with the value of his goods. The recollection that he is carrying one-fourth or one-third of the insurance himself, is a strong motive for carefulness on his part in taking precautions against fire. This is one element in the moral hazard.

When a merchant buys his goods for cash, as it is pleasant to believe many of them do, he should still be careful to keep them insured. How much more then is it the duty of a merchant, who buys his wares on credit, to see that his insurance is well kept up. Prudence in buying and care in selling, especially to credit customers, combined with a rigid economy in conducting his business, will enable the merchant who faithfully observes these suggestions, to meet his obligations with regularity. Such a man rarely fails in business. If a careful inquiry were made into the cause of the many failures among tradesmen or country storekeepers, which occur from time to time it would be seen that they are due to culpable mismanagement, and lack of system in conducting business. In many cases books of account are not kept, or if kept at all are, from want of a proper system, not to be relied upon to show the state of a man's business at any given time. This defect is at the very bottom of half the disputes which arise between retail merchants and insurance companies in respect of losses.

Money received for cash and for credit sales should be carefully kept apart. When money is received in payment of an overdue account it should not be entered as a "cash sale," as is too often done. Let a careful record of stock-taking be made, year by year, and preserved in the safe along with the merchant's books. Let unsalable goods be disposed of as soon as possible. Let outstanding accounts be diligently looked after. If these very necessary precautions are taken, and one's premises do take fire, there will be no difficulty in proving the loss, and no difficulty, if the loss is an honest one, in getting a fair settlement with the companies in which the owner is insured.

The tradesman or merchant who has his premises adequately insured, his books properly kept, his stock in good shape, his outstanding debts sharply scanned and "dunned up" will be sure to have and will richly deserve A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Toronto, Dec. 22.

—What we want are the three levers—moral power, mental power and physical power, * * * And, favored as we are, we should certainly produce our quota of illustrious men if the cultivation of the mind was pursued with the same zeal as the good of the body; if wisdom were valued only as highly as mere material wealth, and sought as strenuously, day by day.—Thomas D'Arcy McGee.