

great deal might be done for the country if the right man could be got for commercial agent. No drone nor figure-head will do; no politician nor academical dude need be sent. A hard-headed Canadian with practical knowledge of our country and its products, good sense, and power of work, could accomplish much for Canada just now.

WHY NOT BUY AT HOME ?

Whose fault is it that so many people at a distance send to the cities for goods ? Is it the fault of the town or village shopkeeper, who takes no pains to display his goods, or that of the women who will not look at home for what they want ? Of course there is always the attraction of the larger market, the greater assortment represented by the catalogue of the department store. And then there is the unexpressed but potent power of fashion—the force of example, drawing unthinking persons to do as others do. These work against the local dealer and his smaller stock.

But if persons can be shown that they may obtain in the town of their residence articles precisely similar to those indexed in Morgan's or Eaton's or Simpson's catalogues without waiting for a week, and without the trouble and outlay of a letter and a draft or the expense of a c.o.d. express collection, will they not buy in the town ? Not always. We have known people in Assiniboia send to Toronto for underclothing and other garments, and run the chance of their fitting, when they could have been fitted perfectly at home with the same kind of goods without walking a half-mile.

Yet, we do come across instances where the local store gets the justice of a trial, and where its contents give most gratifying satisfaction. These are to be heard of in Ontario and in Quebec, and the wonder is that residents of towns and villages are not more loyal to the storekeepers of places where they live. Here is an example from British Columbia, which we find in *The Nelson Miner* :

A man at present in Nelson, B.C., but whose home is elsewhere, yesterday received a letter from his wife asking him to send to Eaton's [Toronto] for some goods which she desired. The husband duly wrote the letter and enclosed a draft for the required amount. On his way to the postoffice he happened to see in the window of one of the Baker street dry goods stores an article which had been included in his order. It struck him that perhaps he could get what he wanted in Nelson, and he went into the store. When he came out he had purchased every article he had intended to order from Eaton's and had paid less money for the goods than the amount of the draft which would have been required to get them from Toronto. There are some Nelson people who would do well to remember this incident when they are in need of dry goods, etc.

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS' BANK.

Whether we are to have a continuance of the present active and prosperous times or not, a point upon which the directors of the bank express themselves in cautious terms, the year ended 15th May has proved a profitable one for the Eastern Townships' Bank. Its earnings justified the payment of the usual dividend of seven per cent. and the addition of \$50,000 to reserve.

The board resolved to pay, besides, out of the balance remaining at credit of profit and loss, a bonus of one per cent., which the shareholders appear to have received with the alacrity usually displayed by shareholders in such circumstances. Earnings have returned to their average of recent years, after an exception in the case of 1898. The Rest now reaches \$900,000, a very creditable proportion to capital.

While the bank has not yet opened in Montreal, because premises to suit could not readily be obtained, there is no reasonable doubt that it will shortly open there. St. Hyacinthe and Granby will also soon have branches of this active bank, whose British Columbia business has thus far turned out satisfactory. Having faith in the future of Canada, and being undeterred by any dread of an excess of banking capital for its wants, the directors recommended an increase of the capital of the bank from \$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000. And the shareholders passed a by-law providing for such increase. As if in disclaimer of the notion that corporate bodies have neither soul nor sentiment, the directors not only express patriotic sympathy with the Mother Country in the South African war, but they ask, and we are happy to see that they receive, the approval of the stockholders in subscribing some of the bank's money to the Patriotic Fund.

PROVISION TRADE CONDITIONS.

High prices, especially in butter, cheese and hog products, are the feature of the provision trade. In hog products in particular the demand is very active and prices continue to advance in sympathy with if not in ratio to the price of live hogs. With hogs at \$6.87½—and it is said \$7 per cwt. has been paid in some instances—it is understood that products could not be manufactured from them and sold at present quotations. Thus it would appear that, if prices of hogs hold, as the stocks of winter packers become reduced the prices of products must go still higher.

Butter is coming forward in limited quantities for this season of the year, and nearly all that arrives is used for local consumption, and is selling at better prices than could be obtained for export. Larger dealers are not buying more than they need for their local trade. Some country merchants are reported to be holding for yet higher prices though conditions would hardly appear to justify this course. In some quarters, however, the light supplies of butter are attributed to the high price of cheese having made the manufacture of that product more profitable than butter making; and it is a fact that more than one creamery in Ontario has been transformed into a cheese factory.

The new cheese of this year found the English market practically bare, and though the exports from Canada have been abnormally large the price in the Old Country remains firm and the demand good. Still English dealers are hopeful of getting cheese cheaper before long, and are buying in a hand-to-mouth fashion.

COAL RAISING IN NOVA SCOTIA.

It is significant of the growing importance of the coal mining industry in Nova Scotia to find it stated by the president of the Dominion Coal Co. that the requirements of that company for the year beginning May, 1901, will be not less than 3,000,000 tons, all of which is under contract or can be sold at satisfactory prices. We also remark that during 1899-1900 the company's sales of coal increased by 400,000 tons; and the directors expect that the coming year's shipments will be not only larger but at a higher average price than the company has ever made. This all means continued activity in various directions in Cape Breton, where the company's mines are.

The report of the treasurer gives the results of the company's working for the year ended with February last as