

more feasible. So long as there is a considerable difference between the Customs duties of the two countries, the adoption of Commercial Union would make a great change in our commercial arrangements. But once let the Canadian tariff be advanced to about the same percentage as that of the United States, and Commercial Union becomes perfectly natural and feasible. This in itself is enough to show that Commercial Union is utterly opposed to free trade. Free traders who cry out for such an arrangement either do not understand the principles in which they profess to believe, or they have little faith in the free trade or fair trade policy.

To Shippers of Hides.

The report of the hide and leather examiners presented at the board of trade meeting on Tuesday last, states that though the quality of city hides is very good, those from the country are very inferior, on account of mutilation in skinning and carelessness or ignorance in handling and shipping to the market. A short time ago THE COMMERCIAL referred to this matter, and at that time gave instructions to guide butchers and shippers in handling hides. It is said that not less than \$20,000 is annually lost to this country through the improper handling of hides. In view then of the importance of the subject, we will again refer to some of the principal points to be considered in handling hides. First it will be necessary to describe what constitutes the different grades. A No. 1 hide is a steer or cow hide, free from cuts scores and brands. A No. 2 hide is also a steer or cow hide, cut, scored or branded. Stags and bulls are classed as No. 3, and the latter, when branded, cut and scored, are classed as damaged, or rejected. A hide might be free from cuts, scores and brands, and still not grade as No. 1, owing to its being out of condition in other respects. Before a hide can be inspected, according to the Act governing the inspection of hides, horns, hoofs, snout, muzzle, tail bone, switch, etc., must be removed, either by the owner or the party to whom the hides have been shipped. A score is a scrape which has been given the hide in skinning, and which approaches the nature of a cut, though the hide is not cut clean through. A score is equally as damaging as a cut, as it renders the leather thin. This is an injury which should be guarded against in skinning an animal. After the hide has been properly taken off, it should be spread out and liberally sprinkled with salt. The salt should be thrown on with the hand, and distributed, not on a portion, but all over the hide. It usually takes about ten pounds of salt to properly prepare a hide. The hides may be left spread out for a time or until ready to ship, when they should be folded as follows: First throw in the head, then the sides, and roll up and tie each one separately. Sometimes hides reach the market bundled up several together, which is not right. Hides not treated properly are graded as damaged or rejected and are called hair slipped. Surplus parts should be removed before shipping, as it only adds extra freight charges to the shipper. Not unfrequently from 15 to 20 pounds have to be removed from a single hide before it can be

inspected, which simply means the loss of freight on that weight. Hides which are not properly treated in due time, or fallen or dead hides, lose substance, and cannot grade high, though free from blemish in other ways. In this connection it is gratifying to note, that since the Winnipeg inspection was established, the quality of hides has improved very materially, some dealers placing the improvement as high as 50 per cent. Winnipeg inspection is recognized at Toronto as very accurate. Of three cars of Winnipeg inspection, which were reinspected at Toronto, the maximum variation was found to be but one pound, which is considered very close.

THE C.P.R. Co. have recently made a heavy reduction in freight rates on live stock, shipped to Winnipeg. The reduction from Morden to Winnipeg, is \$8 per car, on a previous charge of \$28 per car. This will give an idea of the proportionate lowering of the rates.

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