

DEGRADING THE WHEAT STANDARDS.

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toba standards were too high. It seems to be imagined by some that the difference between a low and a high standard comes out of the farmers. THE COMMERCIAL claimed last fall, at the time the standards were fixed, that any great depreciation in the quality of the standards must be met by a corresponding depreciation in the price of the grade. The grade applied to a lot of wheat cannot alter the quality one iota. If our No. 2 hard were so reduced in quality as to be equal to our present grade of No. 3 hard, No. 2 hard in such case would only be worth No. 3 hard price. It is nonsense to suppose that the farmers would receive relatively the same price for the different grades, if the quality of these grades were materially reduced. The fact that Minneapolis No. 1 northern wheat is now selling lower than Chicago No. 2 regular, amply proves this contention. There has been an agitation in Minnesota, just as there has been in Manitoba, to reduce the quality of the standards of the different grades, with the idea that this would in some way benefit the farmers. Value for value, however, is the unalterable law of trade. Buyers will pay for what they get, and if a No. 1 grade of wheat is only equal in quality to another grade of No. 3, the price will be in the same proportion. The reduction in the Minnesota standards was made owing to these outside influences, the inspection department there being subject more to political than commercial conditions. The price of poor wheat, however, has not been increased by the degrading of the standards so as to take in inferior wheat, as is evident from the fact that the price of No. 1 northern Minneapolis wheat has declined relatively to below the value of the standard Chicago grade of No. 2 regular.

THE ASSINIBOINE WATER POWER.

When the city of Winnipeg applied to the Dominion Government for legislation enabling the city to utilize the water power on the Assiniboine river here, it will be remembered that the government refused to sanction the construction of any works which would interfere with the navigation of the river. As the Assiniboine has not been navigated since 1882, this seems like a strict proviso. The construction of works necessary to utilize the water power, are not so costly in themselves, but to construct such works and at the same time provide for the navigation of the river, makes the undertaking vastly more expensive, as in the latter case a canal would have to be built to overcome the dam necessary to utilize the power. There are schemes on foot to utilize the Assiniboine for water power at other points besides Winnipeg, particularly at Brandon, and it has been proposed that joint action be taken by the towns and cities along the river to induce the government to declare the river a closed stream so far as navigation is concerned, at least temporarily. This would allow the construction of dams to utilize the water power, without making it necessary to build the expensive canals for navigation purposes, which we may add are not likely to

be of any use. The Assiniboine river, as it stands at present, is of little value as a navigable stream. The water power which it affords at many points along its course, is of far greater value at the moment than the prospective navigable value of the river. We think it only reasonable that the government should agree to the proposal to close the stream for navigable purposes, at least temporarily, and if at some future date the government is prepared to improve the stream, so as to render it really valuable for purposes of navigation, then the necessary canals could be built where water powers have in the meantime been developed. To compel the construction of these canals now, when there is no probability whatever that they will be used for many years, is to impose unnecessary burdens upon progress, and particularly industrial development in Manitoba.

Grocery Trade Notes.

Many grocers are complaining of dull trade and the inability of collecting accounts due them. This is the old story told every year about Christmas time. Presents must be bought and the grocer, butcher and baker must wait for the money due them. Why not adopt the cash system and remedy this?

Where a grocer makes a mistake is to regard all his competitors with ill-will. In this he is at a disadvantage, as they are more numerous than he is. There is a decided gain in practicing a neighborly "live and let live" policy, no matter what your financial condition might enable you to do.—*Retail Grocer Journal*.

The art of window dressing is understood by but few grocers, says a contemporary. Take a walk along some of the principal streets, and very few windows of grocery stores are dressed with an eye to the artistic. There is too much sameness, too much lack of judgment in the goods selected to attract and create comment.

There is something in the character of the grocer's boy that we have always admired as we have watched his career, and, when taken into consideration with the many offences that are charged to him, we cannot help smiling at the great responsibilities that are laid upon his young shoulders, but he bears them bravely, and not infrequently makes the very best use of his limited opportunities. A careful investigation into the commercial careers of some of the most successful and enterprising merchants, would reveal the fact that they are indebted for much of their success in life to the hard knocks they received, and the valuable experience they acquired in the humble capacity of a grocer's boy.—*Chicago Grocers' Criticism*.

Goods that are in brisk demand pay the best profit, says a contemporary. Such an accumulation of stock, may be marked at a heavy advance on cost, but they are not profit gatherers. Large sales, quick returns, ample profits follow the sale of goods that move briskly. There is an art in making goods, which ordinarily move slowly, go out freely. Some articles sell themselves, but most lines need pushing. Fancy groceries are as of public admiration as a vain person. Why, then, place them out of sight on rear shelves or inconspicuous places? Keep them where people are forced to see them.

How can the worth of a grocery clerk ever be made apparent to the employer unless he (the clerk) be given an opportunity to put his ability into practice. Giving them such an opportunity would often score to the benefit of the grocer, and would instil in the clerks a far greater interest in the affairs of the store. It does not follow that those who have not sufficient capital to engage in business for themselves, that on that account they are not gifted with more executive ability than those possessing such capital. Give the young men a chance to show their worth, and the results

will be mutually beneficial.—*Retail Grocers' Journal*.

We have no faith in the ultimate success of a grocer who depends upon cutting prices to sell his goods. In nine cases out of ten he will go under in time. Such a man cannot safely be given credit. Neither can credit be given safely to a man who drinks to excess. In these days of keen competition, a man wants a clear head and a steady nerve, and these are not gained by excessive drinking. Another bad falling which makes credit timid is extravagant living. The man who spends money freely and is known to be an extravagant liver, will usually bear watching carefully. Another safe rule to follow is not to trust any man too much. Opinions vary as to how much credit a man is entitled to, but it is safe to say that no man ought to be trusted for more than a quarter, or a third at most, of his visible assets.—*Michigan Tradesman*.

System is of great importance in these days of multiplied industries and vast combinations of capital. As discipline is in the army, so is system in business. The grocer who has his business well in hand, and, no matter how large and extensive his trade, so well regulated as to be able to attend to it with certainty and dispatch, is best calculated to make money. Why? Because he is in a position to know just how he stands, and what effect every move he makes will have. He is best situated to keep watch over his business and thus avoid losses, pilferings, undue accumulations of dead stock and other happenings of like nature. This matter of system is something that should be studied by small dealers just as well as by larger and more extensive concerns. If you are in a small business to day and let trade take care of itself while you sit around and only get yourself in action when you are compelled to by circumstances, the chances are that you will remain just what you are to day—a small dealer. If on the other hand, you show yourself a thorough grocer with the executive element in your make up, you stand excellent chances of securing heavy financial backing that will enable you to do business on a large scale, with consequent monetary improvement. System is always an evidence of industry and thrift.—*Ex.*

Toronto Board Banquet.

The board of trade banquet at Toronto on January 5 was an unequalled success. Covers were laid for six hundred and fifty guests and there were not half a dozen seats vacant. H. N. Blain, president of the Toronto board of trade, presided. Among those present were the Governor General, Lieutenant-Governor Kirkpatrick, Sir John Thompson, Hon. A. S. Hardy, Major General Herbert, Hon. Wilfred Laurier, and Hon. Frank Smith.

In responding to the toast of the "Queen and Governor-General," Lord Stanley spoke strongly against annexation and independence, and depreciated the proposal to make the office of governor general elective, as it would result in the creation of a party executive.

Sir John Thompson responded to the toast of "Her Majesty's Ministers." He said that serious questions were ahead of them—questions which concerned not only the Cabinet, but the citizens at large; and prominent among these was one which affected their religious belief and consequently was liable to arouse such passions in some of their breasts. But, in dealing with the question, there were two grand safeguards, and these were, first, the tolerance of the people, which he was sure was to be relied upon, and, second, the constitutional action of the government; and he could assure his hearers that the Government would be bound absolutely by the constitution of the country throughout. Turning to the question of trade, Sir John said that he trusted they would follow a policy which would make the people to the south of them the best of neighbors, "but," he added, "please God they shall never be anything else than neigh-