

The Commercial

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The Commercial certainly enjoys a very much larger circulation among the business community of the country between Lake Superior and the Pacific Coast, than any other paper in Canada, daily or weekly. By a thorough system of personal solicitation, carried out annually, this journal has been placed upon the desks of the great majority of business men in the vast district designated above, and including northwest Ontario, the provinces of Manitoba and British Columbia, and the territories of Assiniboia Alberta and Saskatchewan. The Commercial also reaches the leading wholesale, commission, manufacturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

WINNIPEG, APRIL 24, 1893.

Defertilisation of Russia.

Is the main source of Russia's wealth—the fertile black soil—becoming defertilised? According to Count Tolstoi, who is a practical agriculturist as well as a philanthropist, it is. He avers that within the past 15 years several districts in that region have become so poor of yield that they have been abandoned by their tillers, who have tried their luck elsewhere. This view is adopted by Prof. Dokvotshaiëff, in whose opinion the Russian "black loam soil is undergoing a process of progressive exhaustion. Many sources of moisture are, he maintains, drying up and completely disappearing; others are being choked up. And, worse than all else, the fertile surface soil is being swept away from the steppes with an ever augmenting force, whereby the arms of rivers, the lakes, and every species of hollow, are filling with sand and other coarse alluvium." Mr. Abramoff, another Russian expert, expresses much the same opinion. This thesis is also handled in an anonymous article in the *Edinburgh Review* of January last. The writer's conclusion is that the black or cereal lands are perishing through lack of moisture, which he attributes to "ruthless forest destruction;" he points out that the belts of trees which have disappeared so rapidly within late years had the double function of retaining moisture and of screening the land from the full severity of the east winds, piercingly cold in winter and scorchingly hot in summer. These hot winds are not only capable of withering the corn in a few days, but also bring with them sand storms which "turn fertile land into permanent deserts." We are, in fact, invited to believe that the corn lands of South Russia are now undergoing the same process which has converted so large a portion of the once fertile Central Asia into a desert. In support of this thesis, the author gives a number of precise details concerning the drying up, in whole or in part, of some of the most important rivers.—*The Miller.*

Artificial Eggs.

According to the newspapers a Philadelphian named Gross has discovered a process for making eggs. He has worked with models, and the results, it is said, are so satisfactory that he will establish a factory in Philadelphia at once. He claims he can make the eggs for 8 cents per dozen and they can be sold for a good profit at 10 cents all the year round. He guarantees that they will never spoil, and, whether fresh or old, they will always taste like a new laid egg, and will build up as much tissue in the human frame, if eaten, as the genuine. The only thing Mr. Gross fears is that as soon as he is launched in the manufacture of eggs the farmers will combine and have a law passed knocking him out, as they have flooded the oleomargarine men.

The shells are made out of a paper machine baked hard and cast in molds the shape of an egg. A small hole is left in one end, and first the white is put in and then the yolk. The manufacture of the shell is simple enough, but Mr. Gross declines to tell by what process or out of what material he produces the interior of the egg. He says he has applied for a patent and this part of his invention must remain a secret until his rights are secured.

One defect in the method of manufacture must be overcome, and Mr. Gross thinks he can successfully accomplish the feat in. After the contents of the egg are put inside, the difficulty is to seal it. At present the seal is easily broken, especially if the egg is boiled. Speaking of the arrangement inside, Mr. Gross said that the yoke is likely to be in any position, but under no circumstance will the white and yolk mix. In some eggs he had broken the yolk was found in the centre, in others it was in one of the ends.

Mr. Gross claimed for his egg all the virtues possessed by the real article. It can be used for all purposes in cookery. It can be beaten like a hen's egg, and assists in producing delicious cakes of all kinds. The white may be used for frosting and icings, and, lastly, the manufactured egg may be served on the table. It is easily boiled, fried, poached or scrambled.—*Merchants' Review.*

The Advance in Sugar.

In referring to the advancing tendency in the sugar markets recently the *New Orleans Picayune* says. The causes of this general advance are the comparative light supplies of sugar in Europe, and the prospect that the Cuban crop will fall considerably short of last season. The main sugar supply of the United States is derived from Cuba, hence the American sugar market is more promptly affected by influences operating in Havana than in any other cause. It is said that the Cuban yield is falling considerably short, and extensive fires in the cane fields have further diminished the promise of the crop. An early commencement of the rainy season is also expected, in which event the deficit will be increased.

With the prospect of a short sugar crop, there is reason to expect that the United States will have to draw upon European supplies of beet sugar later in the season. This prospect has already assisted in the advance in London, and should the Cuban shortage turn out as serious as some fear, a further general advance in the level of prices may be expected to follow.

Not only will this improvement in the price of sugar enable the holders of the remnant of the last Louisiana sugar crop to realize a good profit on their goods, but it will also stimulate Louisiana planters to exert themselves to secure a large yield for the next season. A short sugar crop in Cuba means the practical elimination of foreign stocks during the late fall months, when the Louisiana crop is being marketed, and, consequently, a brisk competition between refiners and dealers or speculators for supplies, with consequent substantial benefits to the Louisiana industry.

All accounts respecting the prospects of the

coming sugar crop are favorable. While the cold spring has retarded the growth of the cane, it has had no damaging influence, and planters generally report a very good stand. The acreage has generally been increased all over the sugar belt, and every effort is being made to secure a large crop.

How much may be Saved by Discounts?

It is, perhaps, of little use to allude to the importance of accepting all opportunities in the shape of discounts, because when a merchant's capital is insufficient, as is the case with too many retail merchants, he is lucky if he can meet his liabilities at the utmost limit of time which is commonly allowed. Yet it does no harm to occasionally point out how great a saving may be made by the acceptance of all discounts; indeed, much good may thereby result to the readers of trade papers, constant dwelling upon the point inducing them to practise rigid economy, and in every possible way, push their trade until they are in a position to save the discounts. We therefore reprint the following illustration from an earlier volume of the *Merchant's Review*. Suppose you have bought goods to the amount of \$500, and the terms of the invoice read: 5 off, ten days; 4 off, thirty days; 2 off, sixty days. If you pay the bill within ten days you save \$25—5 per cent. If you accept the second discount, and pay in thirty days at 4 per cent, you would be paying \$5 for the use of \$500 for twenty days, which is at a rate of 25 cents a day, or \$91.25 a year. Discounts on grocery bills are not often as liberal as those mentioned above, but, however small, they are certainly worth saving, if for no other reason than that some competitor may be in a position to accept them, and watchful to never let the chance escape. He can therefore undersell you, and your cry of "cutter" will lose its force, because his margin of profit will be as wide as your own.—*N.Y. Review.*

Imports of Dairy Products.

An English exchange says:—The British imports of dairy products increase in amount year by year, and last year was paid, according to the declared value, over £22,000,000 sterling. Of butter, we received 2,183,000 cwt., chiefly from Denmark and France, and of imitation butter, or margarine, 1,305,350 cwt., principally from Holland, where it is largely prepared with animal fat and cottonseed oil. Nearly £3,750,000 sterling was paid for this butterine, or more than one-fourth the sum paid for genuine butter. Of cheese, we imported 2,232,814 cwt., half of which came from the Dominion of Canada. Of condensed or preserved milk we received 500,000 cwt., for which we paid £930,288. The import of eggs increases enormously, and exceeded last year 11,000,000 "great hundred," valued at nearly £3,800,000.

Smut in Wheat.

The following remarks were made in a paper read at a meeting of the Brandon farmers' institute by S. A. Bedford, of the Manitoba experimental farm:—

"Now in regard to quality! In certain years the best of management will not prevent frost, but we all know that many a two-horse farmer undertakes a four horse crop and he is then surprised that a portion of it is frozen.

There is one source of loss which is completely under the farmers' control, that is loss from smut. Any person who in this enlightened age refuses to blue stone his seed wheat deserves to loose from ten to twenty cents per bushel, for he not only risks loss to himself but also risks injuring the reputation of the wheat of the province. So far ought to be wits bluestone have been made on the experimental farm. In every instance the bluestone has effectually killed the smut. So that there is no excuse for smutty wheat."