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THE TRADE REVIEW

Intercolonial Journal of Commirce.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 1868.

MAKE A GOOD START!

WE are now on the threshold of another year. Eighteen hundred and sixty-seven is gone; eighteen hundred and sixty-eight has begun. season is one suitable for reflection. The faithful Minister improves the occasion by pointing out past follies and urging better resolves in future, and what is well-timed in morals cannot be much out of place with regard to business. The "Trade Review" proposes therefore, to "improve" the occasion from a commercial standpoint, and throw out some hints which, it is to be hoped, may make the "New Year" more successful to many business men than past ones have been.

So far as Canada is concerned, the old year-1867has been a prosperous year. We have enjoyed some better ones, but many worse ones. To use the nomenclature of mercantile tests with regard to credits, the year has been fair—that, is, we have had fair crops, fair business, and fair prosperity. There have been, however, the usual "ups and downs" in business-particular houses and individuals have failed. In some of these cases, probably no human foresight would have been sufficient to prevent disaster; but in the majority of cases, failure has been the result of folly or carelessness, or both combined. Such failures afford a warning lesson to all those engaged in Commercial pursuits, and induces us to say to any who may have found their liabilities in 1867 rather heavy to be borne, "make a good start at the beginning of the New Year." "How shall we do this?" the reader may imagine. The particular circumstances of each business can only be known to the heads thereof, and if they are qualified for their positions, they will know better than any others, what measures are necessary to place their business in a healthy position. The Commercial journal can only throw out some general suggestions-but these will apply in the majority of cases where languishing or declining businesses exist.

Well then, the unsuccessful trader may "make a good start" in 1868, by avoiding past follies and adopting wiser maxims. These follies and maxims may be various, and it would require more space than is at our command, to touch upon them all. The principal ones, however, may be summed up in a few heads, and we would cite-

First: Don't live above your income! This is a common, and, generally, a fatal fault. Canada has MORLAND, WATSON & CO.,

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not suffered so much from this as the United States. but the evil largely exists. The man is not honest, to judge strictly, who spends money he has not earned. No person can justly live above his income. Human happiness has been described by a witty writer somewhat in this fashion: £50 income, £49 19s. 11d. expenditure-result: happiness; £49 19s. 11d. income, £50 expenditure-result: misery. We think this writer somewhat of a philosopher as well as a wit, and heartily commend as true philosophy, that whatever may be a man's income, he should live within it.

Second: Don't purchase more stock than you are able to pay for! In other words-avoid over-speculation. During 1867, not a few Canadian traders came to grief in this way; many more burdened themselves so much with unsaleable stocks that their legitimate profits were eaten up. Larger purchases than the market or business requires, often brings disaster, always reduce profits. Better go slower and surer.

Third: Don't allow your expenses to swallow up your profits! The writer has known instances of large and (what might have been) lucrative businesses, ruined by lavish and unnecessary expenditures. Fancy shops, unnecessary clerks, book keepers and porters, unlimited advertising-these are the rocks against which handsome profits are sometimes dashed. only to land the establishment in bankruptcy. A prudent, careful, manager, would, in such cases, retire with a competency in a few years. Very frequently the heads of such houses suppose they are rapidly amassing wealth, and only awaken to the real facts of the case when the storm bursts upon their heads. Business men cannot begin the New Year with a better maxim than this: cut down expenditure to the lowest point consistent with efficiency.

Fourth: Don't attend to everything else but your business! The poke-your-nose-into-other-people's-bus.ness kind of people, are generally abhorred; they seldom succeed in what they undertake. No business can be expected to prosper without strict attention. Carelessness is a fruitful source of commercial trouble. Thousands of business ventures fail, solely because they are not sharply looked after. These are lessons which 1867, like every year, has taught, and those who are wise will profit by them. The old saw "if you don't look after business, business won't look after you," is true as any aphorism can be. There are not a few sinners of this description throughout our Dominion-men who seldom have time to appear behind their counters, to keep their books in thorough order, or say a kind word to customers; but who have time in abundance and to spare, to spout politics, to manage municipal affairs, and to take part in public amusements. These things may be, and are, desirable enough in their way; but if one is relying upon any branch of trade for a livelihood, that should receive his first and best consideration, and any who have