

THE TRADER.

TORONTO, ONT., JAN., 1884

Editorial.

"THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON."

This is the season of compliments and good wishes, and THE TRADER, in accordance with the usage of all well conducted society, takes a great deal of pleasure in wishing its numerous readers

"The Compliments of the Season."

We sincerely trust that the year 1884, upon which we are now entering, may, in spite of the few clouds at present darkening the horizon, be one of the happiest and most prosperous that this country has ever seen.

THE OUTLOOK.

Although hard to believe, it is nevertheless a fact that a period of commercial depression is upon us. In spite of the N. P. our factories have overtaken and passed the demand for their products, and although the wheat crop generally has been far below the average, the price obstinately refuses to exhibit an upward tendency.

At no period during the past five years has the stock markets been so depressed, and even undoubted securities have felt the effect of the predicted financial storm.

There is no use of dissembling—things do look blue, but are they as bad as they seem, or as bad as some would have us believe?

We think not. The over-production of our factories was a thing to be expected, and it is one of the evils of a protected market. The fall of stocks, although one sign of distress, is not always a true one. Stock broking has degenerated in these latter days as a purely gambling business, and the quoted market price is no index of its real value, more frequently is it an indication of which is in the ascendant, bulls or bears. The worst feature by all odds, and the only one really worth taking serious notice of, is the crop failure, but in our

opinion this is hardly so bad as it is made out. True, the wheat crop in Ontario is far below the average, but then to counterbalance this other things are better than usual. Taking the whole of Ontario crop together, it is calculated that the harvest of this province is in excess of that of 1882 by over \$7,000,000. We heard no complaint of that harvest, simply because the wheat crop was good, but does it really make any difference to the wealth or purchasing of the farmer, whether he sells one thousand dollars worth of wheat or oats, or hay, or butter, or cheese, so long as he gets the money. We think not, but our farmers apparently think it does, and just here is where the difference comes in, and it is in this difference of opinion that we find the true solution to the present cry of hard times.

It seems to us that the present panic is more of want of confidence in ourselves than anything else. A succession of prosperous harvests has made the country better off than it has been for a long time, and therefore better able to withstand a temporary depression. The harvest, although not good, is better than last year, so that that cannot be pleaded as a valid reason. Our merchants have met their accounts fully as well as in former years, so that in that respect there is nothing to alarm anyone.

Want of confidence is a fearful thing. Give a dog a bad name and you may as well shoot it, and it is exactly the same of the times, make a people believe they are poor and they will whine about being hard up, and very soon bring on the very thing from which they were seeking to escape.

We don't think we are going to have hard times yet. Trade may, and probably will be quiet for some months, but we see nothing in this to alarm ourselves needlessly about. The best way in such an emergency is to put a good face on things. While not undervaluing, do not over-estimate the danger. The exercise of economy and common sense are about the best preventives for such commercial paralytic attacks as these.

FIRE.

In our last issue we had something to say by way of warning, in reference to the danger arising from burglars, in this article we touch upon a danger, no less real, although more common.

The fires last month in Port Perry,

Napanee, and elsewhere furnish a text from which a very impressive lesson might be drawn by every business man in Canada. The man who fails to profit by such a lesson would be better out of business, or independent of it.

If able to be his own underwriter and stand such a loss, it is entirely his own business, although he would generally be regarded as a very foolish person. If, however, he owed for the goods and was not independent of business, then to his foolishness he adds an injustice to the creditors who trusted the stock to his charge in the expectation that he would take every possible precaution in keeping it safely.

No matter how careful people may be fires will happen when they are least wanted or expected, and this risk is now so generally recognized, and has been so accurately gauged, that insurance experts can tell almost to a fraction how much the country's average loss from fire will be, and how much it will cost each individual member to guard against that loss. A few years ago, but few of our business men insured against fire, now every man who pretends to have any business training whatever, not only insures against loss from this cause, but takes good care that the amount of his insurance is large enough to save him from loss.

Some people seem to imagine that an insurance policy is a kind of a charm against fire, and that if they are insured at all they are all right.

There never was a greater mistake than this, for as the rain descends upon just and unjust alike, so fire ravages the insured and uninsured irrespective of the protection of parchment policies or heraldic fire protectors over the doors of the insured.

This being the case, every man in business should make it a point to see to three things in connection with his insurance:

First. Make sure that he is insured.

Second. Make sure that he is fully insured.

Third. Make sure that his insurance is in some first-class company.

Cheap insurance usually means risky insurance, and risky insurance is but a shade better than none at all. Seeing that it is but common sense to keep fully insured in some first-class company, we trust that our many readers