

CHEAP GOODS.

We have repeatedly made the suggestion that instead of pandering to the craze which has developed of late years for cheap goods, merchants should try to get their customers to understand that it pays to give attention to quality. Much money has been wasted on shoddy clothes, which did not wear, boots with paper or leather-board soles, which went soon to pieces, food which was of questionable flavor or dietetic value, but which were "cheap"—the meaning of cheap being in these cases low-priced.

There is in the last issue of the Winnipeg Commercial a series of imaginary dialogues, between a grocer and different customers, which capably illustrate how "green" most people are as to the quality of merchandise they buy—even food-stuffs. The grocer welcomes the lady, and she asks the clerk for "a pound of nice tea, one that you can recommend.

Clerk—Yes, ma'am, something I suppose at about 50c. or 60c. We have something nice at those prices.

Lady—Have you anything less than 50c. or 60c.?

Clerk—Certainly, ma'am, but you asked me for something I could recommend. Now I always make it a point never to recommend an inferior article, as I always feel that our reputation is at stake, and it is the same with teas as it is with most other articles of diet, there are the pure and the impure. I always believe in recommending the pure because I have too much respect for my customers' systems to recommend a bad one.

Lady—That is right, I did not know that tea was adulterated. What do they put in it?

Clerk—Prussian blue, gypsum, graphites, and sometimes a kind of grey clay, and sometimes they load it with iron filings in order to make it weigh heavy. Then some of the tea has been used once and retwisted and refaced, and some of the cheaper tea is not tea at all—it is made of the leaves of other plants.

Lady—Dear, dear, I'll take a pound of your 60-cent. You say it is all right?

Clerk—Yes, ma'am, and if you find any fault with it bring it back, and we will replace it, for we are here to suit you.

Lady—Thank you, I know more about tea than I ever did in my life before. I must tell some of my lady friends, who buy cheap tea, about it.

Clerk—All right, ma'am, you will find what I say correct; anything else?

Lady—Yes, I want a pound of good coffee.

Clerk—Do you want it pure or adulterated?

Lady—Adulterated! do they adulterate coffee?

Clerk—Yes, ma'am, most certainly they do.

Lady—With what?

Clerk—Well, with nothing, as a rule, that will harm you, only when you pay for coffee you do not expect to get roasted peas, rye, wheat, beans and chicory, and when you desire to be sure of getting it pure, you do not expect to get imitation paste beans thrown in to deceive you.

Lady—Paste beans! do you mean to tell me that they make coffee beans of paste?

Clerk—Yes, ma'am, and it would take you all your time to detect it if you were not aware of it beforehand.

Lady—Dear, oh dear, what will they do next?

Clerk—When people demand cheap stuff, madam, it is hard to tell what you are getting—often everything but what you ask for.

Lady—Dear, oh dear, give me a pound of your 40-cent coffee.

Clerk—All right, madam; anything else?

Lady—Yes, one pound of good jam; what is the price?

Clerk—Well, it is the same with that as it is with the other goods, if you want it pure, minus turnips, etc., 15 and 20 cents—if you want it with these ingredients, 7 and 10 cents.

Lady—Give me a pound of the 15-cent and I am much obliged to you. This talk has been very interesting.

This grocer's clerk was, of course, ideal; but if he were real, and there were some thousands of him in the country, their efforts along the line of the above questions and replies would often give a black eye to abominable "cheap goods."

A BANK AT BENNETT.

In its issue of Monday, April 3rd, the Vancouver World has an interview with Mr. R. M. Fulton, manager of the branch of the Merchants' Bank of Halifax, at Nanaimo. Mr. Fulton had just returned from a several weeks' visit to Lake Bennett, in the far north. At Bennett City, which is one of the busiest places in the north at present, he opened the first and only bank in the place, though it is said that in the near future the Canadian Bank of Commerce will also have an establishment there.

Mr. Fulton came down from Skaguay by the steamer "Amur." He gives an account of the opening of his bank at Bennett. Business was first conducted in a restaurant, where he secured a convenient corner, and though, as he says, you could almost step through the flooring of the building, he considered it safe enough for his purpose, and went ahead, and did a lot of business. People there were appreciative of the banking facilities that were afforded and consequently he got plenty to do. After staying in these cramped quarters for a week or ten days, he moved into a log building, the largest at Bennett, and there the business is now fully ensconced, Mr. Murray, formerly of Vancouver, being in charge.

"Bennett, it seems to me, will be one of the busiest places up north this year," said Mr. Fulton. "There are seven or eight steamers building there at the present time, and that will be the starting-place for nearly all the down-river navigation, although people are now taking through stuff as far as Lake La Barge, awaiting the opening of the ice. It is also on the direct road to Atlin, and every day tons upon tons of stuff go through and are being taken by the Too-Chi and Fantail trails to Atlin City. Up to Bennett the trail is in splendid condition. Double wagons can be driven along it, and goods are being moved on forward very rapidly. Business is exceedingly good there. Prices are, of course, very high. Lumber is \$150 per thousand. The largest buildings are the bank and the Provincial Government offices, the latter having cost \$7,000. Dr. Keen is the new postmaster.

CANADA COMPANY.

The ordinary meeting of the Canada Company was held on Thursday, 25th March. Sir Robert Gillespie presided, who, in moving the adoption of the report, said the sales of land had been small, and they leased about the same number of acres in 1898 as in 1897; but the conversions into freeholds were in excess of the previous year by 1,200 acres. They had now 66,482 acres leased, with the option of purchase, as against 64,711 in 1897, and 66,454 acres, as compared with 64,430, leased without the option of purchase. The receipts also compared favorably with those of the previous year, being in the aggregate for

1898, £23,409, against £20,809 in 1897. The expenses of management were slightly less. Another satisfactory feature was that the increased average price of the whole disposal of land continued, and that while the average increase in price showed in 1896 10¼ per cent. over the 1894 valuation, in 1897 it was 9½ per cent., and in 1898 13 per cent. The increase in the latter year over the 1894 valuation on the low-priced land, was equivalent to 23½ per cent. As to the current year, he expressed the expectation of continued progress. The remittances which the company had received from Canada were in excess of those obtained at the same date last year—£11,000, against £8,000. The report was carried.

OUR NORTHERN FISHERIES.

Reports are coming in almost every week showing that the halibut poachers from the Sound and other American ports are as busy as ever on the banks in Queen Charlotte Sound and off the west coast of Vancouver Island. Unless prompt steps are taken to put a stop to these outrages, very serious harm may be done to these important fisheries. As it is the Americans are doing their utmost to "work" them to their utmost capacity, while they may do so with impunity. We are informed the numbers of those halibut thieves are increasing every week.

Emboldened by their success in the past, and well aware that the Canadian Government have as yet taken no steps to protect those fine fishing grounds, by means of a preventive cruiser, those American fishermen may be said to be enjoying what themselves would call "the softest kind of a snap" ever offered to bold, hardy and unscrupulous poachers. We observe also that the Sound papers studiously maintain the misleading phraseology in their reports of the return from the Canadian fishing grounds of those boats, calling the halibut banks "the Alaskan banks," "Alaskan fisheries," and so on. According to those newspapers, everything north of the Strait of Juan de Fuca is Alaska. Canadians who are well-informed in this matter say it will be greatly to the Dominion's advantage to protect those northern halibut banks from poachers, and that the proper way to do it is to put into commission in these waters a vessel whose commander would have ample powers under the law to deal effectively with the nuisance.

British Columbia has wisely determined to exclude aliens from the placer gold fields of the province; it is a pity that aliens should be making handsome fortunes out of Canadian fisheries. Were those halibut banks in American waters, and Canadian fishermen attempted to poach upon them, one can just imagine the agitation of the American press and people over the injustice. In answer to the question: Are those Queen Charlotte banks worth protecting? The question might well be referred to the enterprising gentlemen from Seattle and Tacoma who have been supplying the tables of the United States with magnificent Canadian halibut for some years back. They know.

—The Newfoundland railway has 548 miles of main line, and with branches a total mileage of 629. The officers are: R. G. Reid, proprietor; W. D. Reid, general manager; H. D. Reid, assistant general manager; R. G. Reid, Jr., superintendent; G. H. Massey, chief engineer; H. A. Morine, freight and passenger agent; H. McNeil, auditor; H. S. Cormack, treasurer, and H. Crawford, purchasing agent, all with offices at St. John's, Newfoundland.