

annexation to the United States, nor by any system of tariff manipulation which would bury the commercial identity of their country in that of their neighbors south. As to our producers, we can see no point in which their living is inferior to that of those in the United States, and the condition of our laborers we claim is much better. The squalor, wretchedness and degradation to be found in the cities of the United States are as yet unknown in Canada, nor does social anarchy find within our boundaries the material on which to fatten and thrive as it does across the line, where during the past year it has shaken the social and commercial fabrics of the great republic to their very foundations. We have fewer millionaires in proportion to our population than in the United States, but we have also fewer socialists, anarchists and others, who find in the anomaly of the rich growing richer and the poor becoming poorer in a boasted land of equality, good material with which to feed the smouldering fires of social volcanoes. We are satisfied to bear with a great limitation of the former to secure immunity from the latter.

As to our business men, they can look after their own interests at the ballot boxes, and in doing so they can see that commercially Canada has made rapid strides forward, since it was shut out from the market of the United States by tariffs, not only hostile but selfish and dishonest. Our business men know the value to place upon a market, in which their every product has to face a local competitor, and to the tail of which they can only be tacked on at best. Coercion never accomplishes much that it aims at, but often produces opposite effects, and so it has been in the system of commercial coercion, which United States statesmen think they have been applying to Canada during their last quarter of a century. This intended coercion has only sounded the key note of Canadian commercial progress and development, and every weak point in that great work is clearly traceable to the evils of the selfish system of our neighbors, which we have incorporated. Forced to selfishness as a policy of reprisal we may say, Canada has commercially only been slowly but steadily discovering during the last fifteen years its own natural elements of commercial independence and greatness.

Nor has Canada found out that a

British connection has been any drag upon its commercial progress. Such a connection leaves the Dominion free to cultivate commercial relations with any nation in the world on pure free trade principles or protect its own home trade interests just as its people please. But the annexation talked of by the *Banker's Magazine*, or even commercial union with the United States under the present selfish and exclusive tariffs of that country means for Canada the burial beyond hope of resurrection of every vestige of its commercial identity. The business men of this Dominion, who as the *Banker's Magazine* states, want "to earn more, live easier, and accumulate property more rapidly," are not prepared to try the annexation course of reaching their aims, and we believe the majority of our other classes will agree with them. The selfishness of the United States has only forced Canada to commence in earnest the development of its own unbounded resources, and the progress already made in that direction has brought the conviction that the Dominion is making its way rapidly towards a place among the truly great nations of this world, and should it become necessary to sever the tie between it and Great Britain, it will only be to let Canada go free with the best wishes of its former protector and colonizer, to take its place among such nations. The stunted ambition (if it deserves even that name) to become a northern tail to the United States commercial kite is not favorably looked upon by many Canadians and by very few Canadian business men, notwithstanding the statement of the *Banker's Magazine*, that the majority of them are so eager for annexation.

### DATING AHEAD.

The practice of dating ahead by wholesale houses too eager to push business has reached a point in the Northwest where trade safety is seriously menaced thereby. The practice we suppose will never get stamped out, but there is surely some method by which it can be kept within moderately safe limits, which it is by no means at present.

We are well aware that in some branches of the wholesale trade orders have to be taken from samples four or five months before delivery, from the fact that the goods ordered are not manufactured when ordered, and the wholesaler finds the orders taken from samples very useful as a guide to the variety and quantity of stock to make up for a coming season. Often with such wholesalers it is a con-

venience, to have the retailer take delivery of his goods long before the latter requires them, as overcrowding of stock and extra insurance is thus avoided by the wholesaler. Houses of this class have some argument in favor of dating ahead, but by no means for carrying the practice to the extent it is now carried to. For instance we know numerous retailers in this country who now have their fall and winter goods in their stores and the credit they have bought on is six months from the first of October next, and we know of a few who have received goods dated six months from first of November. The exigencies of houses who have to manufacture their goods never did and never will call for such extended credits, and we pronounce the system dangerous at best, and under some circumstances demoralizing on business generally.

But there are another class of wholesalers who go in for long credits and dating ahead and these are those who wish to keep out competition from others who would cut prices. To give such long credits requires long financial resources, and by that policy men of limited means are kept out of the trade, and the wealthy houses engaged therein can thus keep prices up. The end in view may be laudable but the means used we must condemn as bad in principle and tending to encourage laxity on the part of the retailers sold to.

Five years ago a credit of two months longer than in the east was necessary in the Northwest. Means of transportation were then very poor, and goods from the east came quickly if the retailer received them two months after the wholesaler shipped them. Banking facilities and other arrangements for prompt collections were then deficient and a liberal length of credit was a necessity. But things have changed now, and goods can reach any railway point in this country within a week or ten days later than they would reach an eastern point. Banking facilities are also greatly improved and altogether the necessity for long credits and dating ahead is nothing now compared to a few years ago. Then in this province we have an exemption law with which in force the retailer is not conducting business on sound principles if he credits the consumer. That act with all its attending evils is a proclamation of "sell for cash only" by the retailer who understands his business and attends to it.

Two or three years ago when this country was buried under depression, there was no dating ahead or selling on long credits, and to that fact may be attributed the rapid business recovery here in spite of rebellion and other drawbacks. It might be well to stick to these shortened credits, for assuredly, many shrewd business men who understand this country look upon the departure from them as a gateway through which unsafety, if not disaster, may creep upon us at any time and without much warning.