

### A TALK ABOUT BUTTER.

Some attribute the great improvement in the quality of butter to the establishment of creameries and cheese factories. Whatever be the cause, the fact is apparent to all those who have to do with the butter trade. There has certainly been a wonderful improvement in the average quality of dairy butter marketed in Winnipeg within a few years. It is possible that those who made poor butter are now sending their milk or cream to the factories, while those who make good dairy butter, and who therefore find a ready sale for it, continue to make dairy butter. If country merchants who buy butter from the farmers could discriminate more closely in the matter of quality, when taking butter, those who still make bad dairy butter would be driven out of the business.

While speaking about butter, it is a noteworthy fact that the Winnipeg market consumes dairy butter almost entirely. The quantity of factory-made butter consumed in Winnipeg is very trifling. While the local trade takes dairy butter, the creamery output is nearly all shipped to British Columbia. The creamery butter is more uniform in quality and is better adapted to shipping than dairy, but nice fresh dairy is preferred for the local trade. There are many people including some who think they know what really good butter is, who prefer dairy butter to creamery for their own use when they can get the right kind of dairy butter. Of course it all depends on the kind. If the butter had to be taken at haphazard, the creamery would of course average much better, but when a really choice, fresh dairy article can be had, it is for local trade preferable in some respects to creamery.

Dairy butter has been maintained at a remarkably good price this season in the Winnipeg market, especially considering the low prices ruling for butter in eastern markets. This has been due to increased consumption and decreased production. The dry season and the high price of feedstuffs have combined to curtail the make of butter. Winnipeg has been growing in population more rapidly than many people imagine, and we now have a city here of 45,000 population. This means quite a large consuming market for butter and other farm produce. Country merchants, however, must be prepared for a lower market for butter. The recent fine general rains will make good pasturage and the butter output will be greatly increased at once. From this out the city retail trade will be largely supplied directly by farmers, so that the demand upon city commission houses will be greatly curtailed. Up to this week about all the dairy butter re-

ceived was wanted for the local trade, at good prices. It will now have to rule at a shipping basis, and with the low prices in Eastern Canada markets, the price will naturally rule low here, to compete with the eastern goods for the British Columbia market. These latter markets are now well supplied with butter from the east, both in dairy and creamery. Country merchants will now have to watch the butter markets closely and reduce their paying prices in order to avoid loss. They should buy butter on a basis which will give them a margin of profit on the butter itself as well as the profit on the goods which are sometimes given in exchange for butter. This is only reasonable. The profits of the merchants are not so great that they can afford to make two turns to get one profit. The Commercial's telegraphic reports on butter are reliable and up to the hour of going to press, and they should be of much value to merchants who buy butter, as well as to factorymen.

### TARIFF CHANGES.

About a year ago The Commercial published the new Canadian tariff in pamphlet form, giving the full official text. A copy of this pamphlet was sent to all subscribers. This week we publish in another column the official text of the tariff changes made during the present session. By cutting this out and pasting it in the tariff pamphlet, subscribers will have a convenient reference to the tariff of 1897 and the amendments thereto since made. Subscribers who do not wish to mutilate their copy of The Commercial by clipping out the tariff amendments, will be furnished a free copy of the amendments on a printed sheet, on application to The Commercial.

### Business at Vancouver.

Vancouver, June 6.—Business generally is reported fair, with good collections as a rule. Provision prices are somewhat lower all round, butter and eggs having fallen off about two cents. Potatoes are down from \$3 to \$3.50 a ton and meats generally range about a cent a pound lower than last quotations. Very large consignments of Seattle strawberries are in the market, retailing at from 10 to 12 1/2 cents a pound, but in consequence of the somewhat cool weather, the demand does not seem to be very brisk. The same weather cause will probably postpone for at least 10 days any considerable arrival of home grown strawberries, which require more sun for perfect ripening, though the berries are filling out well and the small fruit crop of the season promises to be large. It is reported on good authority, that the Robson-Midway railroad construction contract has been let to Messrs. Mann and others. Work will, it is understood, be begun at once, in which case the big contract will certainly call for exceptional supplies of food, which will probably ex-

haust a small remaining stock of oats and hay now on the B. C. market, and cause an early further rise in prices. In view of this, it is satisfactory to know that the farmers of the Fraser river district expect exceptionally large crops this season of both hay and oats, the former of which crops should very shortly be in course of harvesting. Lumber quotations show a slight decline, but the mills are still kept busy, and the logging camps are hard at work. The building trades are brisk and enterprising speculators are beginning to plan for erecting large numbers of residences in and about Vancouver, principally at the west end of the city. Several important business blocks are already under construction in the centre of the city and every two or three days lapse sees some further addition to their number. It is indeed likely that before autumn, there will be added to the business district of the city at least a dozen important new buildings, substantially constructed of brick and stone.

Shipping generally continues fairly active, although no very large number of passengers are at present making north. Big quantities of freight, including especially live stock, building materials and general merchandise, are however being shipped by the various Yukon steamship lines and now that the Yukon river navigation is opening with direct Vancouver connections, it is becoming evident that the St. Michael's route will attract a large proportion of the local northern business of the next three months.

About a thousand head of cattle were being shipped last week to the Yukon via Pyramid harbor and the Dalton trail. On reaching Fort Selkirk many of the cattle will be further transported to Dawson by rafts specially built for the purpose.

### A War Number.

The Canadian Magazine for June deals at considerable length with the war of 1812, handled by that able writer, Sir John G. Bourinot, who is particularly competent to handle a matter of Canadian history. He tells the story of Brock, de Salaberry, Tecumseh, and the others who took a leading part in the famous defence of Canada in that war. Pictures of most of the heroes accompanying the text. Captain William Wood, of Quebec, tells of Canada's military weakness in an article entitled "In Case of War." Another Canadian officer writes of "Warships and War," giving much timely information about war ships. Another timely article is that on Mr. Gladstone, with seven illustrations. Altogether a very fine number.

### Manitoba Railway Contract Let.

The contract for grading, bridging and ironing the Northern Pacific railway extension from Belmont to Hartney has been awarded to J. D. McArthur. Mr. McArthur returned recently from St. Paul, where he completed arrangements with the Northern Pacific officials, and he will begin work at Belmont as soon as he can get his outfit there. Mr. Alex. Calder is now engaging men and teams, and Mr. McArthur's plant will be shipped from Birtle at once to the scene of operations. The line is to be completed by the time this year's wheat crop begins to move, some time in October.