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Correspondence is invited on topics of interest to the trade, but we do not hold ourselves in any way responsible for the statements or opinions of those using our columns.

Changes or new advertisements must reach us not later than the 20th of the month previous to date of issue in order to ensure insertion.

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All business and other correspondence should be addressed to

THE TRADER PUBLISHING CO.
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CUSTOM FRAUDS.

THE Montreal and Toronto Boards of Trade have recently placed themselves upon record by memorializing the Government against the principle of settlement by compromise of frauds against the customs. They contend, and rightly we think, that where any firm is detected deliberately defrauding the customs, they should be dealt with to the utmost rigor of the law in order that the unfair and dishonest competition engendered by such practices should be thoroughly stamped out.

While it is true that the Government of the country suffers by reason of the loss to the revenue, it is equally true that the chief evil is that which is done to competing houses who pay the lawful rate of duty, and do their business honestly. The honest houses are badly handicapped in the keen competition for trade that now exists in almost every line, and it is little wonder that they register a decided kick when the Government of the country compromises with rascality instead of making an example whenever occasion offers. They regard compromising as simply putting a premium upon customs frauds, and take the ground very strongly that every case that

is detected should in the interest of honest traders as well as the Government be pushed through as far as the law will allow.

They also take the ground that all such cases should be tried in the open court so that the evidence could be published broadcast through the Dominion, and in this way act as a deterrent to evildoers. In this contention, as in the others, we think they are quite right. Publicity is feared by such law-breakers quite as much as fines, if not more, and if this were done, we are sure that the practice would speedily be reduced to a minimum if it were not entirely eradicated.

CANADA SHOULD BE WIDE-AWAKE.

THE end of the South African war, which has raged for the past eight months, is now reasonably within sight, and the prospects are that under the inspiration of British laws and British freedom of trade, South Africa will experience a business boom such as it has never known before, even in the palmy days of its gold fields and diamond mines.

We notice that the manufacturers of the United States are busily preparing to "go in and possess the land," in a mercantile sense; in other words they see a good opening there for American products, and are wide enough awake to endeavor to try and place as many of their goods there as possible. While this is quite right and commendable, it should not fail to act as a warning and an incentive to Canadian manufacturers to go and do likewise. The relations between the South African Colonies and Canada were never so intimate and cordial as they are to-day, on account of the hearty and spontaneous way in which Canadians have come forward to help their fellow colonists in that part of the Empire to support law and order, and uphold the honor of the British flag. Blood is thicker than water, and our ties of blood relationship and mutual dangers shared, to say nothing of our splendid fellows who have sacrificed their lives for British connection and been laid to rest in African soil; all these have helped to form a bond of fellowship and union which will be hard to break.

Although Canada has not engaged in the present war from any motives of gain, it would be folly on our part not to take advantage of the improved relations which must result from this action to improve our trade with our fellow subjects in that part of the Empire. We produce much that they have got to purchase from some other country, and they may just as well do so from Canadians as from any other people, that is if we can sell them of as good quality and as cheap; which we must do if we are to build up a permanent trade with them.

In this connection also we think the time will soon be opportune for the Canadian Government to take the initiative in endeavoring to obtain reciprocal preferential trade relations between Canada and every other part of the British Empire with which we can arrange to our mutual advantage. If the British Empire is to be an empire in anything else than name, a strong effort should be made in the near future to get the great self-governing colonies, notably Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South African Colonies to give a mutual preference to each other on any products which they can exchange without detriment to their own people.