

# THE COMMERCIAL

The recognized authority on all matters pertaining to trade and progress in Western Canada, including that portion of Ontario west of Lake Superior, the Provinces of Manitoba and British Columbia and the Territories.

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The Commercial certainly enjoys a very much larger circulation among the business community of the vast region lying between Lake Superior and the Pacific Coast than any other paper in Canada, daily or weekly. The Commercial also reaches the leading wholesale, commission, manufacturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

**WINNIPEG, AUGUST 18.**

## BAD BUTTER SHIPMENTS.

In last week's issue of this journal there appeared a letter from our correspondent at Vancouver setting forth certain complaints from the produce trade of that city regarding the condition in which a quantity of so-called Manitoba butter had been received at the coast. The letter was published at the time without comment as we felt that its statements were in the main correct. It would however, be well for those who are interested in the subject to remember that the word "Manitoba" as applied to products of the farm or dairy in British Columbia does not necessarily mean the province of Manitoba but is often used to designate the entire farming region between the Great Lakes and Rockies, so that while we do not attempt to say that the shipments of bad butter spoken of in our correspondent's letter did not originate in Manitoba proper, it is still quite possible that some or all of it did not, but came instead from some part of the Territories. It may be taken for granted that the business of making dairy butter for sale and export is carried on in the Territories with about the same average degree of skill and care as in Manitoba, which means that there is good and bad butter there as well as here and as the Territorial butter finds its way to British Columbia in the same way as Manitoba's product it is more than likely that there is about the same proportion of it found to be bad when offered for sale. But in almost every case where this bad butter is spoken of by British Columbia writers it is called "Manitoba" butter. It may be further said in connection with this matter of bad butter shipments that the complaints apply so far as we can learn almost entirely to dairy butter. The cream-

ery butter is as a rule good. This leads us to say that as the dairy butter output of the west is made by such a large number of people of so many nationalities and under such different ideas of cleanliness it would be a matter for very great surprise if none of it was bad. If the origin of the butter which our correspondent complains of could be traced it would probably be found that it had been made by some of the foreigners who have recently settled in the country as no farmer who has been here any time would ship such stuff to such a distant market if indeed he would attempt to sell it at all.

The output of dairy in the older settlements throughout the west has greatly improved in quality during recent years, and a great deal of very good butter is now made. During the past few years a number of large settlements of foreigners have been established, and from these settlements some very poor lots of butter have been received.

## SUMMER SALES.

Clearing sales of summer goods are now in order. Every merchant knows the inconvenience and loss which follow the carrying over of stocks of goods from one season to another. As a general rule it is much easier to clear out these lines near the end of the season in which they have been fashionable than the next year. This principle is recognized by most of our retail merchants and acted upon, but there are some who from lack of enterprise or foresight never make any special and systematic effort to get rid of goods which threaten to hang on for another season, and in consequence they are usually well loaded with goods having unmistakable signs of having been held over. These should learn to discriminate between lines that are staple and lines that are only saleable at full value for one season, and make a business of shoving off the latter before the season is gone. If sufficient inducement is offered they can usually be sold, especially if they are articles for feminine use. Women are great bargain hunters and will buy almost anything which they think they are getting at a snap. It matters very little sometimes whether the article is something that they can get the worth of their money out of or not, so long as it is a great bargain. This weakness is not confined to any one class of women either, but it is common to all, and is often made use of by astute merchants to enable them to clear off undesirable lines of goods. While we do not for a moment advocate the cutting of prices on any line which has a fixed value and can be sold as well one year as another, we do think that the merchant who anticipates deterioration in value due to change of season, and offers his customers the

advantage of it is a wise man, and should find in such practice a legitimate means of keeping his stock fresh and up-to-date.

In addition to these advantages there is the even greater one in a year like this of the use of money, which is in many cases, very much needed to meet obligations, which, unless paid, bear a rate of interest which would soon eat up the difference in the price of the goods.

## FRAUDULENT SALES OF STOCKS.

Several very shady transactions which have recently taken place in connection with sales of trading stocks and assets generally, in the west, have rather forcibly brought to the attention of jobbers the necessity for some sort of legal check upon persons who are inclined to take advantage of a debtor's temporarily cramped position, and the obtaining, by a purchaser, of a stock of goods, or other assets, at a price far below their regular value, and less than can be realized for them by a more regular process. Indeed, in one case where a sale of this nature was set aside, a much larger sum was realized for the goods, as disposed of by the assignee.

Fraudulent sales of this sort have not been at all infrequent of late, although there are legal barriers which can be placed in their way, when set in motion by creditors, and the intention, if fraudulent or otherwise, of the principals concerned may thereby be thwarted. So soon as a debtor begins to feel the pressure, it is his duty to immediately consult his principal creditors, and instead of looking around for someone to purchase his business at a figure which cannot help entailing a considerable loss to his creditors, he will find, as has been the experience of every honest man, that all things being even, no injustice is done to debtors by their creditors.

So soon as the assets of a debtor's estate become less than the amount of his liabilities, the ownership of these assets immediately reverts to his creditors, the debtor having ceased to have any money interest in them, and although the law may absolve the purchaser from liability to the creditors, transactions such as these are always looked upon with suspicion. The question of fraud in connection with such transactions, although perhaps really not intended, is immediately brought up in the mind of every right thinking man. These transactions are sometimes deliberately planned between both parties (the seller and the purchaser) with intent to defraud, but sometimes the intention of fraud is only by one of the parties. Inexperience on the part of merchants is also