

THE COMMERCIAL

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Office: 181 McDermot Street.

D. W. BUCHANAN,
Publisher.

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, JANUARY 8, 1898.

THE CHINA QUESTION.

There are all sorts of rumors and theories regarding the situation in China. Each alleged authority has an explanation of the intentions of the countries interested, and various groupings of interests are made. Some represent Great Britain as isolated and all the other powers working in accord, while other writers throw Japan and even Germany in with Great Britain. The probability is that each country is working its own game, and that each one is afraid that the others are trying to secure special advantages. It is very doubtful if there be any general understanding among any group of nations in the matter.

THE YUKON TRADE.

The question of allowing foreigners to take outfits into the Yukon free of duty is agitating trade circles, particularly at the coast. The sensible way to regulate this trade would appear to be to apply exactly the same regulations as govern at other ports of entry. Goods should not be admitted free to our northern gold regions which would not be admitted at any customs port. Regarding the bonding privileges, if the United States will not allow liberal bonding privileges for Canadian goods over the strip of territory along the Alaska coast over which the United States exercises jurisdiction, the Canadian

government could close those routes entirely, and thus force the importation of all goods via the Canadian routes. The trade of the Yukon should be strictly guarded and held for Canada.

REDUCING WAGES.

The new high tariff does not seem to be working well in the United States. The new year is opening in that country with cuts in wages, threatened strikes and the formation of numerous new monopolistic organizations. Operatives of the mills at Fall River, Lowell, Manchester and other places have had their wages reduced, affecting 20,000 operatives at Fall River alone. In the coal districts some of the mines are being closed, throwing large numbers of men out of employment. In the wire, glass, tinware, granite ware and numerous other branches, combinations are being formed.

REDUCED FREIGHT RATES

The reduced freight rates, which went into effect on January 1, as a result of the agreement between the federal government and the Canadian Pacific railway for the construction of the Crow's Nest road, will make a very considerable decrease in the cost of bringing in some classes of merchandise. The percentage of reduction on the different classes of merchandise included in the arrangement, were stated in The Commercial last week. The reduction in car lots from Eastern Canada points to western points amounts to as much as over \$30 per car on some of the commodities. The same proportionate reduction is made on goods shipped from Winnipeg to Western points, so that the local trade will not suffer as a consequence of the reduction in through rates. New tariffs will be issued showing the new rates.

HOLIDAY BUSINESS WITH THE RETAIL TRADE.

A representative of The Commercial interrogated a number of the retail merchants of the city as to the business; they had done during and before the holidays. In no case was dissatisfaction expressed and in most instances the feeling was rather enthusiastic.

E. B. Nixon, of the Hudson's Bay Co., said: "Holiday trade was particularly good, better than last year. The individual days before Christmas and New Year's, were perhaps not quite so heavy as last year, but the two weeks were very much heavier all through. We found people spending more freely, owing no doubt to better times generally. All our high-class Christmas goods went off well. We

were practically sold out on Christmas eve of goods that were anticipated to do till the New Year. We have never been so busy as we have been for the past few months. Trade is changing, competition is keener, but the state of trade should please any business man."

Mr. Preston, of the N. R. Preston Co., Ltd., said: "We had the best Christmas trade in all my long experience here. We had a large crowd the day before Christmas, but for two weeks or more before our trade was good, being spread over a longer period than other years. We noticed that useful articles formed a large percentage of Christmas purchases, though we did a big toy trade and in fancy goods too. For the past two or three months our trade has been almost double in volume of that of a year ago."

Barre Bros., jewellers, said, "the holiday trade was very, very good, almost doubling the same period in '96. People bought heavily, and of the better class of goods, and our stock of those lines was bigger than ever. Mail orders formed a good share of our Christmas business."

Porter & Co., wholesale and retail dealers in china, glass and silverware, said the trade was fully up to expectations, the volume of business exceeded the same period for three or four years past. "People seemed to have the cash and the desire to spend it, and our values gave them the opportunity." This firm had a particularly handsome display for Christmas.

Mr. Fred Ansley, the new manager of the Hart Stationery Co., Ltd., said: "We found the holiday trade exceedingly good; though the majority of purchases were small. High priced editions of poets, and other works did not sell well. The tendency seemed to be to get bargains, and the cheap, showy American editions of books seemed to catch the trade. We did a large mail order business." As Mr. Ansley only reached the city the week before Christmas from St. John's, N. B., his former home, and this is his first experience here he could not compare with other seasons.

W. J. Boyd: "We had a very good month's business, the holiday trade extending more over the whole month of December, and as a consequence, the rush just before Christmas not being so great as in former years. On the whole the holiday trade was very satisfactory." The wholesale confectionery recently established by Mr. Boyd also did a big business in finer lines of goods with the city and provincial retailers.

Alex. Taylor, bookseller and stationer, had his hands full, and with an extra staff for the holiday season made a great many people happy, with books, fancy goods, children's