

# 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.

**Seventeenth Year of Publication**  
ISSUED EVERY SATURDAY

Subscriptions, CANADA AND UNITED STATES  
\$2.00 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE OR \$2.25 WHEN  
NOT SO PAID; OTHER COUNTRIES, \$2.50 PER  
ANNUM IN ADVANCE.

Changes for advertisements should be in not later  
than Thursday Morning.

Advertisements purporting to be news matter,  
or which profess to express the opinions of this  
journal, will not be inserted.

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 Can-  
ada, daily or weekly. The Commercial also  
reaches the leading wholesale, commission, manu-  
facturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada

WINNIPEG, MAY 20, 1899.

## MISUNDERSTOOD.

A letter from a British Columbia  
correspondent recently appeared in  
The Commercial, in which a strong  
protest was made against granting a  
charter to the proposed Corbin rail-  
way. In an editorial comment there-  
on, The Commercial said that the  
arguments against the Corbin road  
were presented in about as forcible a  
manner as it is possible to put them.  
Some of our readers have miscon-  
structed this remark into an indorsement  
by this journal of the arguments used  
against the proposed railway. This  
is an entirely erroneous opinion, and  
furthermore an opinion entirely at  
variance with the past utterances of  
The Commercial in referring to this  
and other similar enterprises. While  
we gave our correspondent credit  
for presenting his side of the case in  
a very forcible manner, we did not  
necessarily endorse his contention.

## Land Grants.

The Winnipeg board of trade has  
been asked to endorse the request for  
aid to carry out proposed extensions  
of the Dauphin railway. The aid asked  
for, it is understood, includes the  
"usual land grant." It is to be hoped  
the board will not lend itself to such  
a proposal as that of recommending  
any further alienation of the public  
domain. The manner in which our  
western lands have been disposed of,  
will form one of the black  
pages in Canadian history. The  
policy followed by the governing  
power in dealing with this great pub-  
lic heritage, has been such as will bring  
upon us—the people of this generation—the  
curse of posterity. Those in control  
of public affairs have altogether  
failed to grasp the wonderful and far-  
reaching possibilities of the future,  
within reach of the people who inherit-  
ed this vast and rich public domain. Al-

ready a vast area of territory has  
been dissipated. A halt cannot be  
called a moment too soon to the waste-  
ful and destructive policy which our  
government after another in Canada  
has followed in dealing with the public  
domain.

## Furs in London.

A representative of the London Daily  
Mail had an interesting chat yester-  
day with Mr. Bills, the wholesale fur-  
rier of Aldersgate street, on the sub-  
ject and learned some details of the  
prices which may be paid for a lady's  
quivering or evening cape.

Mr. Bills was found amid a most  
comfortable surrounding of furs;  
piles of them were everywhere, and  
restoons of gray, black and brown  
skins hung from the ceiling and walls  
with a pleasant suggestion of warmth  
after the Arctic atmosphere of the  
street.

"Yes," said Mr. Bills, "furs have cer-  
tainly increased tremendously in price,  
and next winter they will, so far as  
appearance point, be still dearer.  
The reason is somewhat difficult to  
give.

"You must know that London is the  
fur market of the world. Buyers come  
from all countries, and in no other  
capital are there any sales of raw  
goods which in any way approach  
those held here. The sales are held  
in January, March and June for gen-  
eral furs, and in November seal-skins  
only are sold. The March sales last  
about a fortnight, and the goods are  
on view for about three weeks pre-  
vious to the days of sale.

"To take the furs in their classes.  
Silver fox skins, which are taken  
chiefly by France and America, a  
few only being bought by England  
and Russia, show an advance of 90  
per cent on last year's prices. The  
highest price paid this year was £340  
for a skin, and this was by a Paris  
firm. White fox, which are dyed the  
fashionable shades, have advanced 60  
per cent, while the blue fox, which  
have a natural color of slate or bluish  
gray, are now 170 to 200 per  
cent dearer, and some of the finest  
Iceland skins fetch even more.

"Next year's fur necklets will prob-  
ably be whole-skin ones, with head,  
etc., complete, and for these the prices  
have advanced 75 per cent. The sea-  
otter provides one of the most valu-  
able skins there is, and with a prob-  
ability of a greatly reduced supply  
next year, and the possibility of the  
animal's early extinction, the advance  
is 50 per cent. Russia takes the ma-  
jority of these furs, and £150 is an  
ordinary price for sufficient to trim  
the collar and cuffs of an overcoat.  
The highest price so far has been  
£260.

"Lynx are dearer by forty per cent,  
and the American marten, which in  
England is generally called sable,  
shows an advance of sixty per cent.  
While this American variety fetches  
from £1 to £5 a skin, the Russian  
sable—the real thing—is worth from  
£3 to £40, and a cape of, say, twenty-  
inches depth costs 2,000 guineas. Mink,  
which much resembles marten in color,  
though the fur is shorter and coarser,  
and is affected by the ruling prices of  
sable and marten, and has gone up  
fifty per cent, will probably be much  
used for capes next year.

"Bear-skins of all varieties do not  
show much change. The finest, which  
are used for army head-dresses, fetch  
from £15 to £17, but the general sorts  
are no dearer than a year ago, and  
should be greatly in request at their  
present moderate prices. Skunk, one

of the best wearing furs in use, al-  
though some thirty per cent dearer,  
is still moderately cheap, and likely to  
be in great demand in consequence."—  
Daily Mail.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE COMMERCIAL

## BUSINESS AT VANCOUVER.

Vancouver, May 15.

In coast cities business continues  
good, while in Vancouver the perilous  
building boom continues and the fear  
of the city being over built is still more  
apparent.

The salmon industry is threatened  
again by scarcity of tins, many of the  
canners foolishly allowing their rivals  
on Puget Sound, to buy up their  
stock when they were feeling discour-  
aged over the tardiness of the federal  
authorities in changing the salmon  
regulations. Owing to the scarcity of  
tins there will be a small pack in any  
event this season.

It all depends on the weather, whe-  
ther British Columbia is to have an-  
other devastating flood or not. Farm-  
ers in the lower Fraser are becom-  
ing very anxious, and the outlook is  
not at all encouraging. Owing to  
the backward spring, snow accumu-  
lated on the mountains until quite late  
and should warm weather, which has  
kept off so far, suddenly come, floods  
will follow.

The only change of importance in  
the market is in eggs. Eastern eggs  
are commencing to arrive, and are  
driving the United States eggs out.  
There is a veritable meat famine on  
the Sound, which affects this market  
more or less, but not very materially.

## THE SEALING INDUSTRY.

The Victoria Colonist says: Nearly  
all of the coast sealing vessels have  
returned to port. Those vessels ab-  
sent are the Dora Seivard, which will  
remain up the coast to fit out for the  
Behring sea; the Mermald, which, it  
is thought, may cross to the Copper  
Island coast; the Penelope, Diana,  
Mary Taylor and Hazie Hatic. The  
catches of these are given in the  
table appended as reported by other  
vessels up till late in April or within  
a week of the closing of the spring  
season. Taken together with the  
good prices for seal fur realized at last  
fall's sales the large catches this year  
has put a new complexion on the seal-  
ing industry. There were two ves-  
sels of the year's fleet which made  
splendid hauls. The Geneva,  
captained by W. Byers was top-liner  
with the Mermald as close second.  
The catch to date is as follows:  
Viva, 442 skins; Munnie, 236; Enter-  
prise, 601; Geneva, 1,582; Umorina,  
450; Zillah May, 637; Otto, 725;  
Ocean Belle, 703; Beatrice, 310; Fav-  
orite, 278; Ainoka, 449; Borealls, 200;  
Arlantis, 362; Dora Seivard, 319; Hat-  
zie 200; Penelope, 600; Mary Taylor,  
140; Mermald, 1,350; Diana, 775.

One hundred and sixty seven whites  
and four hundred Indians were em-  
ployed in the industry during the past  
season, and it is probable that more  
than double this number of men will  
find employment on the fleet which  
goes to Behring Sea. The season  
was notable for plenty of seals and  
fine weather. No damaged schooners  
have reached home. Losses of more  
serious nature, however, were chron-  
icled, seven lives being sacrificed.