

# 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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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, FEB. 17, 1900.

## WATERWAY TO LAKE SUPERIOR.

In the United States there is talk of opening a canal from the Red River to Lake Superior. A bill for this object has actually been introduced in the House of Representatives at Washington. The object is to establish a cheap transportation route for the products of the Red River valley. The proposed route is via the St. Louis river, thence to the upper Mississippi and a series of lakes to Red Lake and down Red Lake river to the Red River. No survey, however, has yet been made of the route and the feasibility of the proposed canal is therefore merely a matter of speculation. As far as is known, the route mentioned would appear to be not nearly as easy of development as a route via Rainy lake, Rainy river and Lake of the Woods, mainly in Canadian territory.

## GOOD ROADS.

It is pleasing to note that the farmers in some districts at least are awakening to the importance of the question of improving the country roads. At a recent meeting of the Farmers Institute of Posen, the first matter for discussion was, "Our Roads," with the result that it was decided to petition the government to improve the condition of the main road of the locality.

The government should certainly take up this matter energetically. While a great deal must be left to the municipalities themselves, the government can come to their assistance by appointing instructors and in other ways. The abolition of the antiquated statute labor system by the legislature would also be an important step in the right direction. Progress-

sive municipalities in the east have abandoned this system, which has been a hindrance rather than an assistance in securing good roads.

## C. P. R. Land Sales.

	1899.	1898.
January .....	14,718	22,014
February .....	13,747	20,650
March .....	24,045	33,421
April .....	36,626	43,145
May .....	39,673	43,148
June .....	54,225	49,203
July .....	47,402	39,512
August .....	35,214	19,448
September .....	25,317	18,007
October .....	30,473	17,026
November .....	42,633	25,979
December .....	52,255	17,039
	416,428	348,612

  

	1899.	1898.
January .....	\$ 46,411.35	\$ 72,924.83
February .....	43,371.00	66,399.00
March .....	74,430.00	109,010.00
April .....	116,835.00	149,276.00
May .....	125,862.00	137,535.00
June .....	169,231.00	160,200.00
July .....	149,546.00	123,010.00
August .....	110,705.00	63,911.00
September .....	83,719.70	56,336.43
October .....	99,429.09	55,570.67
November .....	140,491.39	82,918.61
December .....	161,762.38	54,703.01
	\$1,324,796.91	\$1,123,691.58

Last year's land business was the largest in the history of the company. In addition to the above figures the Canada Northwest Land company's sale for 1899 are approximated at 82,000 acres, the proceeds of which will total \$115,000. In 1898 the C. N. W. L. Co. sold 71,000 acres for \$383,000. Its business is now administered in connection with the C. P. R. land department.

## Fish in the North.

Some interesting information as to the extent of the fishery industry in the north and the number of fish caught in Great Slave lake, and the Mackenzie river was given to the Edmonton Bulletin by W. E. Reid, who returned a few days ago after an extended sojourn in the north country. Fish, of course, constitute the diet of the north, and the number which are caught and consumed yearly are surprising. The following figures were supplied by Mr. Reid. They represent the catch last season at the points named:

Fort Simpson .....	15,000
Providence, Catholic mission .....	40,000
Providence, Hudson's Bay Co. ....	9,000
Baptiste Boviere, trader .....	5,000
Ray River, mission .....	35,000
Resolution, Hishop & Nagle and H. B. Co. ....	20,000
	124,000

This catch, large as it is, does not include those taken by the Indians and half-breeds, who constitute 90 per cent. of the inhabitants of the north and whose diet is almost exclusively whitefish.

The fish are caught in nets just as winter is setting in. After being caught they are "hung" which consists of stringing them on sticks without being either cleaned or scaled, and hanging the string up out of the reach of the dogs. The most palatable way of eating them, Mr. Reid states, is to take a fish frozen, and hang it up alongside your campfire until it is roasted, when the skin is peeled off and the fish is eaten much as one would eat a cob of corn. The natives also make a very edible "spawn bread"

out of the fish spawn. The average weight of the whitefish is two and a half and three-quarter pounds. In the winter trout of excellent quality are caught through the ice with lines. Notwithstanding the great number of fish which are taken from the lake every year the number does not appear to be diminishing. In fact the natives report that the fisheries for the past few years have been better than they ever were before.

## Cordwood Tenders Accepted.

At the meeting of the Winnipeg city council on Monday night last, tenders for cordwood, previously accepted by committees, were confirmed by the council as follows:

The tenders of D. D. Wood for 500 to 800 cords of jack pine at \$4.35 per cord, delivered at the various city buildings as required. The tender of W. Henry & Son for 200 to 400 cords of poplar wood for rollef purposes at \$3.70 per cord, to be delivered as required.

The Winnipeg school board called for tenders recently for from 300 to 500 cords of jack pine, and a like quantity of tamarac, and awarded the contract for the former to D. D. Wood at \$4.25 per cord, and the tamarac to T. D. Robinson at \$4.73 per cord.

## Fur Trade Notes.

The great advance in raw furs, as shown at the recent London sales, may cause some sharp changes in fur fashions, as there will be a tendency to seek cheaper lines or imitations.

The impression prevails, says the New York Fur Trade Review, that the collection of raw furs for the season is quite small, and that it is too late to change this condition. The situation, we think, impresses the necessity for close study and great deliberation in action for the remainder of the season to insure stability in values.

The next public raw fur sales in London will be as follows: Hudson's Bay Company, March 19 to 22, C. M. Lampson & Co., March 19 to 30. Latest dates for forwarding shipments from New York to March sales are: For silver, blue and cross fox, otter, beaver, fisher, lynx, wolverine, musk-ox, dry fur seal and sea otter, March 2, all other articles, March 9.—Fur Trade Review.

It is said that there has been an increase in the number of furs marketed in the state of Michigan, as a result of a law protecting fur-bearing animals. Undoubtedly it is a proper and wise course to protect fur-bearing animals, so as to prevent the killing of them out of season. A great waste is occasioned by the slaughtering of animals at a time when their pelts are of little value. Not only has the number of skins increased in Michigan, but there has been a more marked increase in the average value of the skins marketed. One dealer places the increase in the average value at nearly 100 per cent, as worthless or almost worthless skins, killed out of season, are not now offered.

## A Mammoth Leather Belt.

The Ogilvie Milling Company, Winnipeg, have contracted with Sadler & Haworth leather belt manufacturers, of Montreal and Toronto, to supply them with a mammoth leather belt, to transmit 1,000 h. p. It will be 72 inches wide, three ply thick, and over 130 feet long. This belt when finished, will be the widest and heaviest leather belt in use or ever made in Canada.