

# THE COMMERCIAL

A Journal of Commerce, Industry and Finance, especially devoted to the interests of 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. By a thorough system of personal solicitation, carried out annually, this journal has been placed upon the desks of the majority of business men in the district designated above, including Northwest Ontario, the Provinces of Manitoba and British Columbia, and the Territories of Assiniboia, Alberta and Saskatchewan. The Commercial also reaches the leading wholesale, commission, manufacturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

WINNIPEG, SEPTEMBER 27, 1897.

## HORSES FOR THE NORTH.

There are a large number of horses on our western ranges which are not of a class that renders them readily saleable for agricultural or other purposes. The opening up of the northern gold country may create a demand for these horses. If the Edmonton route is used to any extent next season, these range horses should prove suitable for packing or riding, and they would no doubt be found very serviceable for this work. They would undoubtedly answer the purpose much better than eastern horses, being more hardy and better suited to the climate.

## SECTION 22.

The liberal interpretation of the famous section 22 of the new United States tariff bill, as announced from Washington early last week, will give great relief to the shipping and mercantile interests on both sides of the boundary. The evident intention of the clause was no doubt to destroy the international carrying trade in regard to importations of foreign goods, at least. The attorney-general has decided, however, that the clause does not include goods coming directly from a foreign country, through Canada. Goods imported first into Canada, and then exported to the United States, will be subject to the 10 per cent dis-

crimination. The latter class, however, only include about one-quarter of the foreign goods reaching the United States through Canada. The other three-quarters simply pass directly through Canada in bond, and will not be subject to the extra duty of 10 per cent.

## HANDLING HIDES.

Dealers state that there is a very considerable improvement in the quality of hides now marketed here, compared with a few years ago. Owing to carelessness in handling hides, a great many are cut or scored with the knife. This reduces them to second grade, and if badly damaged, to third grade, thus entailing a heavy loss in value. Some butchers are still very careless about handling their hides, not only in taking them off, but also by careless and imperfect salting, which makes a badly cured hide. Dealers know those butchers who handle their hides carefully, and pay better prices to such, while those who are known to have cut or badly handled hides, do not so easily obtain the top price. The custom of buying hides on a flat rate is not an encouragement to butchers to exercise care in handling. If hides were bought according to grade, on a careful selection, butchers would soon learn that it was to their advantage to exercise care with their hides. As it is, however, the custom of buying hides at a lump price for all grades, does not bring the matter home so closely to the butcher. This applies to country hides. City hides are bought on grade.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CROP.

Hundreds of samples of wheat, from all parts of the country, were gathered together at Winnipeg last week for the use of the standards board in fixing the wheat grades for the crop of 1897. An examination of these would give a fair index to the crop. One feature of the crop is good color. The wheat is generally a bright sample, showing that there has been no damage from bleaching. It should therefore make a good, strong flour. The berry is not large and a good many thin samples were in evidence, while some were very thin and shrunken. The crop is very free from smut, and no trace of frost was observed. Another feature quickly noticeable is the great number of dirty samples—that is, wheat containing an unreasonable proportion of seeds of weeds. From the look of many of the samples, the farmers are paying for the threshing of a vast quantity of weed seeds this year. Besides paying for the threshing of weeds, they will have the labor

of harvesting and marketing the weeds, thus adding to the labor and cost of harvesting the crop all the way through, from the cutting to the marketing, while there will be additional cause for dissatisfaction when the grain buyers docks the weight for dirt. Growing weeds is very unprofitable, not only on account of the labor and cost of growing a mixture of wheat and weeds, but also on account of the fact that the yield of wheat per acre will be very likely to decrease in proportion as the yield of weed seeds increases. The soil cannot produce a very heavy crop of grain when it has to supply nourishment and moisture to a large crop of weeds. Barring weeds, the crop has many good features and it will mostly go into the two grades of No. 1 and 2 hard.

## PROFITABLE CROPS.

Big crops are not necessarily profitable crops. Some of the heaviest crops ever raised in Manitoba were among the most unprofitable, while some comparatively light crops have proved very profitable. The price realized is as much a factor in determining the profit as the yield. The comparatively light crop this year will be one of the most profitable crops ever produced in the country. This is not alone owing to the high price of wheat, while of course, that is a great factor. An important feature is the amount of labor required to harvest the crop. This year the weather has been very favorable for harvesting and the straw has been in perfect condition for handling and threshing. There has been scarcely any lost time and the crop has been handled very expeditiously. With one of our heavy crops a few years ago the cost of labor in harvesting was so excessive that the farmer was robbed of much of his expected profit. In fact in some cases the crops were decidedly unprofitable. The work of harvesting dragged along into the winter. Some grain was not saved at all, while scarcely any land was prepared for crop the following year, thus reducing the crop area the following season. Hundreds of stacks were never threshed, as rough weather set in before the threshing was finished and the following spring many stacks were found to have been destroyed by getting damp. There was also a loss from threshing in the winter, by getting particles of ice and snow mixed with the grain. When warm weather set in, the snow and ice melted and made the grain damp. A moderate crop, harvested under favorable conditions, and sold at fair prices, is much better than a heavy crop, with low prices, particularly when the harvest is prolonged by unfavorable weather.