

THE COMMERCIAL

The recognized authority on all matters relating to the commerce of the Western Canada, including that part of Ontario west of Lake Superior, the Provinces of Manitoba and British Columbia and the Territories.

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

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 whole sale commission, manufacturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

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MANUFACTURERS AND THE TARIFF.

An absurd story has been published by certain government papers to the effect that the Canadian Manufacturers' Association is or has raised a fund to buy up and establish papers in the interest of protection. The Commercial has no hesitation in characterizing the report as ridiculous. This journal is not in the secrets of the Manufacturers' Association, if that association has any secrets, it is not necessary that we should be to the effect that this journal is altogether too absurd to be worthy of serious attention. The Canadian Manufacturers' Association is composed of business men, and business men would not be likely to seriously consider such a proposition. It is only politicians who undertake to control the press for private purposes. It is not a business enterprise.

This story about the Manufacturers' Association has probably grown out of the efforts of the association to credit a feeling among purchasers of giving a preference to home manufactures. The association has undertaken what is termed an "educational campaign," the object of which is to encourage consumers to buy home manufactured wares. A fund for this purpose is being raised. There is nothing secret nor underhand about this. It is a policy which will commend itself to all classes of the people, regardless of political leanings. It is a well known fact that prejudice has existed against home manufactures which has operated very seriously against some Canadian industries. A section of the Canadian people had become imbued with the idea in "the correct thing" to buy and wear or use imported goods. Articles inferior even to the home-made would be purchased at an increased cost to satisfy this foolish notion. In some lines Canadian manufacturers have resorted to the questionable expedient of making their wares appear like foreign-made goods, in order to get around this prejudice. Thus consumers at home have worn or used home manufactures often under the impression that they had secured an imported article. Fortunately this foolish and unpatriotic policy seems to be on the wane. Canada has made very great progress industrially during recent years,

and our manufacturers are beginning to command a considerable foreign trade, in addition to supplying the home demand. There are many people in Canada, however, who still keep up the prejudice against home goods. The movement to eradicate what remains of this unpatriotic feeling will be helped forward by all good citizens.

The Commercial takes some credit to itself in the matter of assisting to inaugurate this patriotic movement. Besides advocating this policy in the columns of this journal, we have endeavored by private correspondence with leading members of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association to urge such a policy upon them. The result was that the question was shortly afterwards discussed by the association and steps were taken to put some plan of action on these lines into effect.

We believe the press of Canada as a whole will assist the Manufacturers' Association in its patriotic work by furthering its efforts in this direction. If the people of Canada could be educated to give a reasonable preference for home manufactures, it would be a great help in building up our national industry, and would materially lessen the cry from manufacturers for more protection in the direction of customs duties. Indeed, it would be better for many industries than a large increase in the tariff.

RED RIVER IMPROVEMENTS.

In the present state of the fuel question in Winnipeg, the delay characterizing the improvement of Red River navigation is very tantalizing. It has been affirmed, and not without reason, that the saving to the citizens of Winnipeg in the price of fuel for one year alone would pay the cost of the improvements necessary to open navigation between this city and Lake Winnipeg. For many long years the people of Winnipeg, through the board of trade, city council, and in other ways, have been urging this matter upon the attention of the government, and still very little has been done in the direction of carrying out the work. The treatment which the people have received in this matter from the government is very shabby to say the least. Only about forty miles from Winnipeg lies the large lake known as Lake Winnipeg, nearly 300 miles in length. A considerable fleet of boats are operating on the lake, and the various interests in lumbering, fishing, trading, etc., are tributary to the lake region. An insignificant expenditure in proportion to the value of the interests at stake, is only required to open navigation between Winnipeg and the largest of the five great lakes in the way is the St. Andrew's rapids, a short distance below Winnipeg, on the Red River. After many promises the government did finally undertake to carry out the improvements, but the way the work has been allowed to lag, would give the impression that it is the desire and intention to keep it dragging along for some years yet. Some sharp action should be taken by the people in this matter to try and impress the department with the importance of this work.

Winnipeg is largely a wood-burning community, and owing to the scarcity of anthracite coal and the high cost of fuel generally, the question of increased supply is of special importance. The supply of wood, the great tributary to Lake Winnipeg is very great. With navigation open to the lake the cost of bringing in this fuel would be greatly decreased, even

to such an extent as to make it reasonable to believe that the saving in the cost of fuel for one year would approximately equal the cost of the work necessary to open navigation to the lake. It would seem to be the clear duty of a paternal government to carry out works of this nature as early as possible. This is practically the only work of importance that the Dominion government has been asked to undertake toward improving western waterways in all the vast region between Lake Superior and the Pacific, and this work has been played with for the past fifteen years, while vastly greater expenditures have been going on all the time on less important works in the old provinces. It is to be hoped the reorganization of the public works department under a new minister will lead to some attention being given to western waterways in general and the Red river improvements in particular.

TRANSMISSION OF TUBERCULOSIS.

At the International Tuberculosis congress in Berlin, Germany, last week, Dr. Koch read a paper in which he maintained his theory that animal, or at least bovine, tuberculosis is not transmissible to man. The famous professor will be remembered, first advanced this theory at the last conference in England. His views, however, were strongly combatted by medical and scientific men and he does not seem to have made many converts in his way of thinking upon this important subject. He maintained that if tuberculosis were transmissible from using infected meat, butter, milk, etc., widespread infection would follow, as consumption of infected foods is very great, while internal tuberculosis is very rare. Bolding milk, the professor said, does not exterminate the germs. He declared that only two cases of alleged infection were known to him, and these two cases were not proved. While he would not affirm, he said, that transmission was impossible, such cases were extremely rare if they did occur.

While the medical profession generally maintains that the use of tuberculous meats, milk, etc., is a source of great danger to mankind, the other spoken stand to the contrary taken by Dr. Koch, will cause much doubt to be thrown upon the situation. It does seem strange that the results from eating infected foods are not more marked, if the danger is as great as many medical men assert it is. Notwithstanding the restrictions and systems of food inspection which have been adopted, the consumption of tuberculous food is very great. No one can hope to enjoy immunity from such food, who uses animal food at all. It is quite possible, however, that there are forces at work within the human system to combat the tuberculous germs, and which in most cases overcome and destroy them, thus making the cases of infection much less frequent than might be expected from the large consumption of tuberculous food. The question is still one in which there appears to be room for controversy, though the weight of skilled opinion holds the belief that animal tuberculosis is a source of great danger to man, and that it is necessary to enforce restrictions regarding the inspection and sale of meats, milk, animals, etc., in order to protect the human family.

It is reported from New York that Canadians have been making large sums of money in stock speculation during this year.

TRADE WITH THE UNITED STATES.

A very strong influence is growing up in the northwestern states in favor of freer trade relationship with Canada. The cities of St. Paul, Minneapolis and Duluth have given frequent demonstrations of their desires in this direction. In fact, the question of trade with Canada is apparently a much more lively subject there than that of trade with the United States in this side of the line. The questions of commercial union, reciprocity, or the various other headings under which trade relationship with our neighbors to the south have been discussed, have not been prominent subjects in the Canadian press of late. In fact there is less said and written here on these topics than there was years ago. On the other hand, in the cities of the northwestern states at least, the question of trade with Canada has become a very present feature for discussion.

One phase of this question is the grain trade. The rapid expansion of the production of grain in Western Canada has drawn much attention from our southern neighbors. Their millers and grain shippers are anxious to share in this grain trade, but they are prevented from doing so by the tariff on grain going into the United States. A strong agitation has grown up within the past year in favor of a repeal of the duty on grain, so that Canadian grain could pass freely into the United States. Anticipating opposition to this policy from United States farmers, some ingenious arguments have been advanced to persuade that the farmers would get better prices for their grain, if Canadian grain were allowed to come in. A sample argument of this nature is to the effect that Canadian grain is forced by the shippers to enter the British market at cut prices, in consequence of which the price for grain from the United States is reduced. If the grain were allowed to come into the United States, to be exported along with the crop from the latter country, or used for milling, it is claimed better prices would be obtained all around for the grain of both countries, in the British markets.

Another strong influence existing in the cities of the northwestern states in favor of trade with Canada is found among the jobbers of the cities mentioned above. The jobbers have heard of the rapid development and growth in population of Western Canada, and they are casting longing glances in this direction. They seem to believe that Western Canada is their natural field for exploitation. Following is the blunt way in which the Minneapolis Commercial Bulletin puts the case in discussing this question:

"In a few years at most Minneapolis and St. Paul jobbing houses will be looking for work to conquer. The tariff wall should be pulled down and Western Canada opened to them. Toronto, forty miles north of Western Canada tariff wall marks the death across which Minneapolis and St. Paul must pass if they are to prosper at a living profit. Reduce it partially; give our dry goods, clothing, shoes, groceries, and sundries a chance in fighting chance, and Minneapolis and St. Paul will win from Montreal and Toronto. Forty miles north of Western Canada trade. The merchandise interests of the northwest are now ready and able to invade Western Canada. At the moment the Canadian tariff will allow it."

In addition to the copper wire to be strung from Calgary to Edmonton, the Canadian Pacific railway has arranged to string another copper wire from Winnipeg to Fort William and Port Arthur.