

THE COMMERCIAL

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

Twenty-First Year of Publication.

ISSUED EVERY SATURDAY.
Subscriptions—Canada and the United States, \$2.00 per annum in advance, or \$2.50 when not so paid, other countries \$3.00 in advance.

Changes for advertisements or stops should be in not later than Thursday morning.

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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. The Commercial, published in the leading wholesale, retail, manufacturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

Office 36 and 37 Merchants Bank Building, Telephone 234.

D. W. BUCHANAN,
Publisher.

WINNIPEG, MARCH 7, 1903.

AN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.

The commission which was appointed to inquire into the question of establishing an agricultural college for Manitoba, has reported strongly

The commissioners therefore first took up the question of the rural schools, and considered how they might be improved. Their investigations in this direction indicated that the attendance at the rural schools is irregular, and many of the boys are received sufficient education to fit them for a course in an agricultural college. Suggestions are made for the improvement of the rural schools, the most important of which is a recommendation in favor of the establishment of central schools, to which the children should be conveyed in vehicles. By this plan several schools could be combined in one, thus providing for better classification and better facilities for teaching. Compulsory attendance is also recommended. It is further recommended that graded courses of nature study and of manual training be introduced in the public schools as far as possible, as these afford the best basis for the study of agricultural subjects. Many of the teachers, however, are not at present qualified to impart such instructions, as unfortunately nature study has not received that attention in the past which it should have done in our training schools.

The commission recommend that the college be established as a separate institution from existing schools, and should have an area of land in connection, where practical training could be made a part of the work. A

perative, rather than depending upon funds. If there is anything that rural Manitoba needs it is trees; while as for horticulture, many otherwise fairly good farmers are entirely deficient in their knowledge of or careless in regard to horticultural work. A farm garden is an exception in Manitoba. Occasionally a good farm garden may be found. More have a patch of weeds which they call a garden, but the majority of farmers have no garden at all. They grow some potatoes as a field crop, but no other garden truck, fruits or vegetables are grown on many farms. With fresh milk, cream, butter, eggs, poultry and small stock, along with a good garden, the Manitoba farmer could live like a king, as regards diet. He has the most wholesome and healthful of food within his own reach. Instead of enjoying this privilege most farmers have a wretchedly poor diet, of pork, bread and tea. Instead of rosy-cheeked, healthy women, such as one would expect to and should find in the rural districts in a healthy country like this, greasy, sallow complexions are the rule. The wretched diet served in most farm houses is the cause of this. Many farmers think that the time given to a garden is wasted, hence the absence of the farm garden.

The object of the proposed agricultural college is to improve the condition of the farmers. Forestry and horticulture would do more to improve their surroundings and enable them to appreciate and enjoy life than all

overcome this sentiment and fit young women for the duties which properly devolves upon them, is worthy of encouragement. A provincial school of domestic science is well worthy of support, either as a separate institution or in connection with some other institution.

POLITICAL SITUATION IN B. C.

Advice from British Columbia indicate a probable political crisis in that province. The bye-elections have not turned out satisfactorily for the government and it is said the opposition will have a majority when the house meets. It is thought likely that a general election will be held shortly as an outcome of the present situation. Premier Prior has declared himself in favor of subsidizing railroads with grants of land. It is supposed in some quarters that an understanding already exists between the British Columbia government and certain railway promoters, notably the Canadian Northern Railway people, for a liberal subsidizing of that road. Grand Trunk Pacific people are expected to trip to British Columbia, and may have some understanding with the government of that province as to subsidy. If the government is defeated on the assembling of the house, as now seems probable, the opportunity of the government to put through these railway subsidies will be lost. It is doubtful if the opposition, in which Jos. Martin is an important factor, would



MANITOBA FARM HOMES—RESIDENCE OF WM. SMITH, BOISBEVAIN.

In favor of the college. It is believed the government has fully endorsed the views of the commission, and the college will doubtless be established at an early date. The report of the commission will doubtless meet with general approval by the people of Manitoba. The province is mainly, in fact we may say almost entirely an agricultural country. It is therefore desirable that everything possible should be done to promote the welfare of this great interest. The business people will be more than willing to meet their share of the cost of establishing and carrying on an institution which should be productive of good to the agricultural interests of the province.

The report of the commission indicates a very thorough investigation of the question from all sides. It is recognized at the outset that the instruction imparted in the ordinary rural schools will form the basis for the work of the agricultural college.

department of domestic science is recommended. The commission suggest that there should be at least three principal branches of instruction, namely: Agriculture, animal husbandry and dairying. Agriculture would deal with soils, manures, tillage, rotation, seeds, implements, etc. Animal husbandry would include breeds and breeding, care and feed, etc. of animals, poultry, etc. The existing dairy school could be transferred to the college and the work extended somewhat to include a complete commercial dairy factory. It is suggested that instructions could also be given in such work as farm engineering and blacksmithing, farm building, etc.

The commission suggests that if funds would permit, a branch of instruction in horticulture and forestry should be established. The Commercial considers this a very important point, and we regret that the commission does not recommend this im-

portant study that could be given to scientific agriculture and animal husbandry—important as these subjects are. Attention to forestry and horticulture would elevate the farmer, morally, intellectually and physically, and this is even of greater importance than learning how to produce a few more pounds of wheat to the acre. By all means we would say make the forestry and horticultural branch one of the foremost features of the agricultural college. This is the only exception that The Commercial would take to the report of the commission, that we would emphasize more strongly the desirability of this department.

The suggestion that a department of domestic science should be established is very acceptable. Goodness knows this is badly enough needed. There is altogether too much of this false sentiment abroad which tends to prevent our young women from learning how to become decent housekeepers. Anything that will tend to

agree to the land subsidy policy, as that gentleman is supposed to hold more advanced views on the railway question.

THE PROPOSED ROUTE FROM THE SOUTH.

Some doubt has been thrown upon the statements that the Northern Pacific is behind the proposed new system of railways in Manitoba. At the present time it is impossible to say whether this is really a business proposition or merely a paper road, for charter-mongering purposes. The fact that one prominent Northern Pacific official is associated with the application does not necessarily mean that that corporation is interested in the matter. Neither the Northern Pacific nor the Great Northern have shown their hand in any direct way in connection with these proposed railway lines. In some quarters it is thought that the whole business is a bluff.

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