

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 British Columbia, the Maritime, British Columbia and the Territories.

Twenty-First Year of Publication.
ISSUED EVERY SATURDAY.

Subscriptions—Canada, and the United States, \$1.00 per annum in advance, or \$2.00 when not so paid; other countries, \$2.00. Changes for advertisements or stops of notices in not later than Thursday morning.

Advertisements purporting to be news matter, or much more, will be inserted at the price of this journal, will not be inserted.

The Commercial certainly enjoys a much larger circulation among the business community of the vast region west 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 Western Canada.

Office 36 and 37 Merchants Bank Building, Telephone 25.
D. W. BUCHANAN, Publisher.

WINNIPEG, APRIL 11, 1903.

THE LUMBER AGITATION.

The Western Retail Lumber Dealers' Association has been the subject of a good deal of public discussion of late, and the impression has become a common one that this institution is one which is doing the country harm by unjustly enhancing the price of lumber and restricting the trade therein. All of this may be true and if so then the worst strictures pronounced upon the lumber dealers have been well deserved, but, in the meantime the accusers have produced no convincing evidence to bear out their charges, and until they do it would be well for the public to reserve judgment. Already some have been wrought up to a state of excitement which is in itself injurious. These should exercise a little caution and self restraint until it has been shown that there is anything to justify such an uproar. Machinery is now in motion which will shortly demonstrate the effect of the association upon the price and supply of the important commodity which its members handle.

In the meantime it may be worth while for the public to notice that the lumber association does not by any means represent the entire lumber trade of this country, and that even if it did, its rules cannot possibly be found so as to shut out United States lumber. One of the most important sources of supply for coarse lumber in the west are the numerous saw mills which exist in various parts of the country. These are non-association mills and are supplying a large lumber trade to all who would buy at prices which compare with the most effective competition to the white pine and British Columbia mills. In the higher grades of lumber the United States mills are keen competitors most of the time, and their prices are always a controlling factor in the situation. It has frequently been pointed out by writers and politicians that Canadian farmers living near the International boundary can buy lumber cheaper on the other side of the line than at home. If this be true, it would be interesting to know why so many American farmers do not take it into their hands to come over into Canada for lumber. It is a well known fact that they do, and that Canadian dealers near the boundary derive a considerable trade with them.

As another evidence that there may be some error in the charges against the lumber dealers the fact may be

pointed to that so far at least as outward appearances go, some of them have grown suddenly rich in the business. Their profits may be large, but their worldly circumstances do not bear out such a belief. As a matter of fact responsible men in the trade assert that they do not average more than 10 per cent profit upon their yearly turnover of lumber. Their association rules provide for a margin of 20 per cent, over the wholesale cost of the lumber landed at their yards. Out of this must come running expenses, interest charges and losses by bad accounts.

Arguments such as these however, will not satisfy the public that there is not a considerable amount of truth in the charges against the lumber association. They may help to induce reflection and disinterested investigation, which is all that the trade would reasonably ask for. The only way to finally settle the question is to have it tried before a competent tribunal and this will probably be done. The special committee of the Winnipeg city council, which has been looking into the matter from the widespread point of view, has been referred to the provincial

the whole the aggregate volume of business done as for this season is much smaller than that of a year ago up to the same date. We quote—Liverpool, 15 3/4 May; London, 15 3/4 May; Glasgow, 15 3/4 May; Avonmouth, 15 3/4 May; Antwerp, 15 3/4 May; Hamburg, 25 May; Belfast, 25 May; Dublin, 25 last half May first half June; Leth for May and not quoting for June; Cardiff, 1 3/4 May; Manchester, 1 3/4 May; Quebec-London, 15 3/4 May; and Manchester, 15 3/4 May.

Canada Cycle and Motor Suit.

Toronto, April 1.—Mr. Fred S. Evans of the Canadian Typograph Co., of Windsor, has begun suit in the non-jury assizes against Robt. M. Jaffray, of Galt; E. B. Hickman and Senator George A. Cox, of Toronto, for a share of the profits paid to Jaffray for flotation of the Canada Cycle & Motor Company. Evans and Jaffray expected to make \$150,000 out of the deal. Evans says the defendants paid \$400,000 for properties which were sold by them to the company for \$250,000 preferred stock and \$5,000 common stock, a large portion of which was sold at par and converted to their own use. Jaffray further says that Defendant Jaffray was paid \$20,000 for his services, of which he claims one half, and also asks for an accounting, claiming that he is entitled to a share in the profits made out of floating the concern.

they are issued not to build competing lines, but largely for the purchase of rolling stock and motive power and for the extension of other facilities necessitated by the necessary movement of the products of the country.

One will find that in due time it is phase of the difficulty—incoming out of these new securities—will disappear.

"As for the general situation you may state emphatically and unequivocally that it is most promising, with the country unqualifiedly prosperous. In the iron and steel trade, for example—the barometer of the country's growth, stability and business activity—there never was so great or so profitable business. Orders on hand run far ahead, and the outlook is decidedly encouraging.

"In short, summing the situation up, not only is there prosperity everywhere, but the promises are of a continuation of that prosperity for a long time to come."

Canadian Grocers Limited.

Toronto, April 6.—Application has been received by the provincial secretary's department for a charter for the "Canadian Grocers Limited." This is the company which has already been referred to, and which will embrace several of the largest wholesale grocery firms in Canada and one in Chicago. The capital stock proposed is \$5,000,000, and the head office will



MANITOBA FARM HOMES—G. W. MARSDEN, BRANDON.

attorney-general, and the council has adopted this recommendation. Any action that is to be taken should not be delayed as harm is daily resulting to the country from the widespread publicity which is being given to these charges.

Presumably the agitation regarding the lumber association has been caused by the advances in prices. Manufacturers, however, say that the advance in lumber prices has not been as great as the increase in the cost of production. It is well known that the cost of manufacturing lumber has been greatly increased by the advance in wages and in supplies used by lumbermen. The investigation should show the increase in cost of manufacturing, in proportion to the advance in lumber.

Ocean Grain Freights.

(Montreal Gazette).

During the past week there has been an improved demand for ocean grain freight, and a fair amount of business has been done to some ports, while others have been quite neglected. The route to some ports has been completely booked up for May, and some taken for June, but this does not apply to many. There has been a no important change in rates to note, but should if some would, no doubt, be shaded if firm offers were made. On

Want to Wind it Up.

Toronto, April 2.—Application has been entered in the courts here to wind up the Colonial Construction Co., Ltd., which was organized chiefly by Detroit capitalists to build the Warton best sugar factory. The applicants are the Beadmore Belting Co., which holds a judgment for \$1,407. It seems to me that the general pessimistic talk indulged in not alone in foreign but in local circles is in no sense warranted by the facts. It may be true, as some of the captious critics declare, that the present moment here in the markets many undigested securities to be taken into consideration in a broad or comprehensive way. Are these securities sound or are they unsound; do they represent value or do they not; for what purposes have they been issued—those are the questions.

Mr. Morgan Bullish.

J. P. Morgan says in the New York Times: "It seems to me that the general pessimistic talk indulged in not alone in foreign but in local circles is in no sense warranted by the facts. It may be true, as some of the captious critics declare, that the present moment here in the markets many undigested securities to be taken into consideration in a broad or comprehensive way. Are these securities sound or are they unsound; do they represent value or do they not; for what purposes have they been issued—those are the questions. "To my mind and in my judgment these new securities are essentially sound and stable, and those who have them are in no wise alarmed because of their holdings. Beyond all this

be in Toronto. The applicants are: Alexander Turner, H. C. Beckett, St. Clair Balfour, Hamilton, Lieut.-Col. John S. Davidson, W. A. Warren, John Sloan, Toronto, and N. W. Lettis, Chicago.

Application is also made for a charter as the "Grocers' Real Estate Co., Limited," with a capitalization of \$1,000,000, for the purpose of carrying the real estate assets of the company separately from the stock and plant.

The Trans-Canada Survey.

Mr. Geo. H. Starnes, of the Trans-Canada railway survey, arrived in the city Wednesday, and is staying at the Clarence. Mr. Perry, the engineer in charge of the survey, is at Selkirk, but will come up to Winnipeg to-day.

Mr. Starnes says that the party are still up at the head of Lake Winnipeg, and that about 200 miles of the route has been explored. The country is very favorable for railway purposes as there are no very heavy grades to be encountered. Messrs. Perry and Starnes will leave for Quebec in a few days, after the boat company. They do not expect to be able to go on in a unit, after the boat commencement running on Lake Winnipeg.

The will of the late Gustavus F. Swift, Chicago, shows an estate valued at \$12,200,000. The sum of \$250,000 is donated to charity.